

Environmental professionals' cultural discourse about the environment

Mily Vázquez Harkivi

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Thesis supervisor: Saila Poutiainen

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Tavoitteet. Viestintä on perusinhimillistä toimintaa, joka on myös tärkeää liiketoiminnassa. Niille, jotka kommunikoivat kansainvälisen yleisön kanssa, tiedon puute siitä, miten ihmiset kommunikoivat eri kulttuurien välillä saattaa aiheuttaa väärinkäsityksiä ja pahimmassa tapauksessa konflikteja. Tutkimuksen tarkoitus oli tunnistaa kulttuurisia diskursseja luonnosta ja ympäristöstä, jotka kuvaavat syviä arvoja ja uskomuksia. Teoreettinen lähestymistapa hyödyntää kulttuurista diskurssiteoriaa (CuDA eli Cultural Discourse Analysis). Tämä lähestymistapa on peräisin viestinnän etnografisesta perinteestä ja pohtii paitsi kielelliset näkökohdat diskursseissa, myös konteksteissa, jossa diskurssi tuotetaan, käytetään ja ylläpidetään. Aiemmat tutkimukset ovat osoittaneet, että viestintä on kulttuurinen. Kulttuuri sekä viestintä voi vaikuttaa siihen, miten luonto on ymmärretty. Tutkimuskysymyksissä pyritään tunnistamaan seitsemän ympäristöammattilaisen, jotka työskentelevät metsäyhtiö UPM:ssä, luontoon liittyviä uskomuksia, arvoja, ihmisyyttä ja suhteita.

Menetelmät. Tutkimusaineisto kerättiin puolistrukturoitujen haastattelujen kautta, jotka tehtiin suomenkielellä ja myöhemmin käännettiin englanniksi. Haastattelut nauhoitettiin ja ne kestivät noin tunnin. Luottamuksellisuuden varmistamiseksi, osallistujien nimet on muutettu, eikä oikeita nimiä ole julkistettu. Tutkimuksen osallistujat tarkastelivat tekstiotteita alkuperäiskielellä (joka oli kansankieltä tai puhuttua suomea) ja he myös tarkistelivat tekstiotteita englanninkielestä käännöksestä. Tutkimuksessa materiaali esitettiin suomeksi ja englanniksi, ja analysoitiin soveltaen CuDA menetelmää. CuDA menetelmässä on viisi analyttistä välinettä, joiden kautta tutkimustietoa voitaisiin analysoida: paikka jossa asutaan, suhteet, tunteet, toiminta ja identiteetti. Tässä tutkimuksessa tietoja tarkasteltiin pääsääntöisesti seuraavien teemojen ja välineiden valossa: paikka jossa asutaan, suhteet, identiteetti, ja joissakin tapauksissa, toiminta.

Tulokset ja johtopäätökset. Tutkimuksen tulokset osoittavat, että kolme diskurssia ovat läsnä ympäristöammattilaisten diskursseissa luonnosta. Osallistujille luonto oli paikka jossa voi rentoutua ja rauhoittua, olla itsensä kanssa ja kokea jatkuvuutta. Arvot, jotka liittyvät näihin diskursseja olivat rauha, yksityisyys, autonomia, identiteetti, henkisyys, ja jatkuvuus. Haastateltujen tärkeimmät arvot ovat yksityisyys sekä jatkuvuus tai kestävyys. Lisätutkimukset voisivat perustua kestävyys käsitteeseen. Vastaava tutkimus muilta liiketoiminta-alueilla voisi auttaa ymmärtämään, minkälainen yhteneväisyys luonnon syvien arvojen, kuten kestävyys kohdalla on eri yritysten/teollisuusalojen välillä.

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Abstract

Objectives. Communication is a basic human activity, and one that is also crucial for business. For those communicating with international audiences, lack of knowledge regarding how people communicate across cultures might create misunderstandings and in the worst case, conflicts. The research purpose of this thesis was to identify cultural discourses about nature and the environment that would illustrate deeply held values and beliefs about nature. The theoretical approach utilised in the thesis was Cultural Discourse Theory. This approach originates from the Ethnography of Communication tradition and contemplates not only the linguistic aspects of discourse, but also the context in which discourse is produced, utilised and maintained. Previous research has shown that communication is cultural and that both culture and communication can influence the way nature is constructed. The research question is aimed to identify beliefs and values about nature, personhood, and relationships hold by seven Finnish professionals of the environment working in the forest company UPM.

Methods. The research material was collected through seven semi-structured interviews conducted in Finnish language and translated to English. The interviews were recorded digitally and lasted approximately one hour. To ensure confidentiality, the participants were given aliases and their real names were not disclosed publicly. The research participants reviewed the excerpts of text in the original language (vernacular Finnish) and also reviewed the translations to English language. The material was displayed in both Finnish and English language and analysed applying the Cultural Discourse Analysis (CuDA) method. The CuDa method proposed five analytical tools through which the research data could be analysed: dwelling, relations, feelings, action and identity. In this thesis the data was examined in light of the tools or themes of dwelling, relations, identity, and in some cases that of action.

Results and conclusions. The research results indicate that three main discourses are present in the discourse of environmental professionals about nature. For the participants nature was a place to relax and calm down, to be with themselves and to maintain a sense of continuity. The values related to these discourses were peace, privacy, autonomy, identity, spirituality, and continuity as a way to preserve what is valued. The main value hold by the participants is that of continuation or sustainability. Further research could build upon the notion of sustainability as a cultural discourse. Research related to other business areas could be useful to understand how a deeply held value about nature like sustainability is common across businesses/industries.

Keywords: nature, environmental communication, place, cultural communication, sustainability, cultural discourse analysis, forest industry.

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1. Introduction

In 2010 an oilrig of the company British Petroleum (BP) exploded and sank killing 11 workers. Known as the “BP oil disaster” or the “Gulf of Mexico oil spill” it is considered the largest accidental marine oil spill in the history of the oil industry and has become one of the most publicised environmental accidents. Soon after the incident, the CEO of BP met with Barack Obama. Afterwards he addressed the global media and the local community affected. During the five minute long speech, the CEO described his meeting with the president of the United States and assured the audience that the company would react responsibly to repair the damages caused by the accident. At the second half of the speech he apologized to the “American people” on behalf of all BP employees. To conclude the press conference the executive commented how the president felt about the “small people,” and assured the audience that the company shared these concerns for the “small people”. The choice of words was considered offensive towards some of those affected by the environmental incident, and the executive apologized later for the second time. The entire BP case (oil spill and communication crisis) brought issues of corporate responsibility to the conscience of many since the three elements of sustainability; environment, economy and people were affected by it.

Recently, another case related to communication and sustainability was that involving a top-level executive of Microsoft when he communicated the decision to let go 12,500 of their factory and while-collar personnel through an email that greeted them “Hello there” (Elop, 2014). The seemingly trivial speech act became a source of contempt and the memo sent in July 17th, 2014 to the device business personnel made it to the headlines of newspapers like the Wall Street Journal (see Mizroch, 2014), The Guardian (see Pratley, 2014) and the Financial Times, where the communication style of the executive was analysed and harshly criticized (see Kellaway, 2014). Naturally, the memo was also commented and criticized in Finnish media, following the recent (and unpopular) acquisition of Finnish Nokia’s mobile business by Microsoft. To fathom the disgust that followed that memo one needs to understand the context in which it happened. Microsoft acquired Nokia’s

mobile business in 2013 following some years of uncertainty related to the future of the company and those working for it. For many, the acquisition hurt not only the economy but also a national pride of Finland, where Nokia is originally from. In addition, the dismissal of a significant amount of its personnel was only mentioned at the end of the memo in two lines followed by enthusiastic comments about future business development. The Wall Street Journal reported that in social media the executive's informal greeting was attributed to his Canadian origin. Nevertheless, the mobile device group includes locations across continents and personnel from several countries, not only from Canada or Finland.

The case of BP and Microsoft illustrate how communication is to a high degree cultural both in form and in content. By stating that communication is cultural I mean that it is situated in a specific *context* that includes patterns and conventions that regulate communicative processes within a group. In this thesis I will use the concept of culture utilized in ethnography of communication research: a group of people that share a way of communicating and meanings about the communication (Hymes, 1962). Therefore, in this thesis *culture* refers to patterns of symbols, meanings, values, and rules that belong to the social life shared by a group of people (Philipsen, 1992). Used mainly by people in power, the term “small people” is cultural because it is used, understood and accepted within a certain context and not outside of it. The use of the term “small people” by the CEO of BP expresses beliefs about people and corporations. Probably both corporate executives have a good communicative competence, i.e. knowledge about the appropriate way to communicate (Saville-Troike, 2003) in the business context where they function. However, outside that realm there could be lack of knowledge about other contexts, which makes communication deficient in some cases and counterproductive in others.

Culture affects the way communication is performed by way of choosing what to enact and in which parameters. In this context *parameters* refer to the boundaries existing when communicating within a specific context, and are defined by the speech codes imbued in a particular context. Philipsen defined speech codes as symbols, meanings, premises, and rules that characterize the way

communication is performed (1997, p. 126). Communication is both a creator and a channel of culture. The messages involved in the communication exchange include cultural premises that the entire communication act further reinforces. The culture also shapes the way communication is performed, therefore both culture and communication form a cycle that drives each other. The corporate cases mentioned above highlight how important it is to understand the cultures we live in and communicate, without forgetting to get to know and recognize the cultures recreated in and communicated outside our own cultural boundaries.

The theoretical background of this thesis is based on the ethnography of communication research tradition (Hymes, 1962; Gumperz & Hymes, 1964). Considered the father of ethnography of communication, Hymes (1962) based his theory on two assumptions: that communication is particular to a community, and that speech reflects a specific culture. The fields of research where this approach can be applied are broad. Philipsen (1992) describes ethnography of communication as a “complex method, perspective and body of writings” (p. vii), and as the understanding and reporting of how speech is culturally shaped and constituted (p. 7). The ethnography of communication perspective is suitable for this thesis because as demonstrated in the examples of BP and Microsoft, human communication is a basic and crucial element of business.

Commercial transactions take place on a local and global scale and they not only involve products or services, but also values and beliefs held by those involved in the exchange. Saville-Troike (2003) describes ethnography of communication as an intellectual tradition that studies the patterning of communicative behaviour in a speech community. The corporate world is thus a relevant setting to analyse the social function of language in a specific culture. The examples above also demonstrate how relevant it is to take into consideration the communication culture of the audiences addressed. They are also a good example of how culture shapes not only human but also business communication.

Companies are made of people, and what those in business believe and think about nature and the environment could have an impact on the sustainability or environmental responsibility of a company. In ethnography of communication,

the *speech community* is the group that shares a certain communication culture (or a way to communicate) and a culture (Hymes, 1962; Gumperz & Hymes, 1964; Carbaugh, 1988, 1989). Communication carried out in a specific setting adopts certain characteristics that further reinforce both the discourse about certain topics and the way in which people communicate about those topics. That is the case with communication about the environment. Carbaugh (2007b) recognizes the value of both the theoretical and practical perspectives of ethnography of communication. The former perspective provides the concepts to frame and understand communication in any context, and the latter proposes methods to analyse the communication (Carbaugh, 2007b). In this thesis I will apply one of those practical methods to analyse the research data: Cultural Discourse Analysis (Carbaugh, 2007a). The application of this research method and the explanation of the research results produced what is called Cultural Discourse Theory or CDT (Carbaugh, 1988; Carbaugh et al., 1997). Therefore, a significant part of the theoretical background of this thesis can be credited to CDT.

My purpose is to bring light into the cultural discourses arising from an emplaced speech. In addition, I would like to find out the beliefs and values that condition the speech. The setting is a forest company, in particular the professionals working in the environmental division of the company. Communication shows patterns that create and further reinforce social organization and cultural meanings, and these patterns occur differently with different groups of people and in different places (Carbaugh, 1995, p. 277). By identifying the ways in which the professionals of the environment communicate about nature, the environment, and the company in which they work, I want to find underlying values, beliefs and deeply rooted notions that influence environmental communication. People working in environmental matters have cultural beliefs and understanding how the cultural background of people in business shapes their communication provides helpful information for intercultural interactions in certain contexts, for instance, when discussing with environmental organizations, in a foreign setting, and with customers and other stakeholders. The focus of the research is to understand what kinds of premises there are in professionals'

communication about nature. The need for specific community-based cases studies that trace the use and interpretation, means and meanings of environmental communication has previously been established by academics in the field (Carbaugh, 1996; Milstein et al., 2011; Morgan, 2002). By analysing the data obtained from seven semi-structured interviews, I will be able to learn how environmental professionals from the Finnish forest company UPM communicate about nature and environment in general and also in relation to their work. This thesis is conducted in Finland, a country considered to possess a high level of environmental awareness among individuals and within businesses, and a perceived high level of cultural homogeneity.

2. Sustainable Development

In this section the concept of *sustainable development* is briefly illustrated in order to provide a background and reference for concepts like *jatkuvuus* (continuity), nature, and environment, which will be contemplated in the coming sections. First, I will provide a brief historical recount of the concept *sustainable development*. Defining an ambiguous term like *sustainable development* proves challenging, nevertheless, understanding some of its meanings could serve as background to understand some notions related to environmental communication.

Historically, the concept of *sustainable development* has its origins in world meetings aimed at finding solutions for global human challenges. Many agree that the term *sustainable development* draws its origin in policy circles, and that it became widely known after the publication of the report “Our Common Future” by the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) in 1987 (Borowy, 2013; Harris, 2003; Redclift, 2005). The report is also referred to as the “Brundtland Report” after the chairman of the “Brundtland Commission”, the precursor of the WCED designated in 1983 by the Secretary General of the United Nations to work on matters of development and environment (Borowy, 2013, p. 3). The definition of *sustainable development* included in the report is “development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987, p. 34).

The concept and term of *sustainable development* existed even before the Brundtland Report but after its publication it became mainstream. The emphasis on the definition of *sustainable development* in the report is marginal although the term is utilized throughout the document. Nevertheless, the term *sustainable development* had already been used before the report was published, and the goal of establishing the WCED was not to introduce and define a term or concept but to device policy (Borowy, 2013). However, this document is considered to have defined and introduced the term *sustainable development* not only to policy

discourse but also to academic circles and popular use (Redclift, 2005). In addition, it also raised its relevance in the international political agenda (Lozano, 2008).

The main problematic in defining *sustainable development* is its ambiguity. The way *sustainable development* is understood and subsequently applied varies considerably. Kates et al. (2005) illustrate the malleability of the term *sustainable development* by stating that a project related to this topic can focus on the environment or on development in a local or global scale, and it can be organized by government, civil society, business or by a whole industry. Borowy (2013) argues that *sustainable development* proves difficult to define because its core elements development and sustainability are apparently not compatible (p. 1). The term *sustainable development* has even been characterized as an oxymoron that is conceptualized differently depending on the context, thus producing multiple discourses about it. This has created a significant amount of parallel definitions and contradictory resolutions. It is claimed that in some cases this ambiguity even allows different actors to take advantageous positions. (Redclift, 2005, p. 213).

In business, *sustainable development* is also known as *sustainability*. This term is mostly utilized by businesses to communicate environmental performance, capacity to comply with environmental legislation, or willingness to participate in initiatives that support some aspects of *sustainable development*. The meeting known as the “Rio Summit” or the “Earth Summit” is considered a beacon in *sustainable development* because it produced three documents that would supposedly guide how *sustainable development* would be conducted. These documents issued by the UNCED in Rio were: the *Agenda 21*; a detailed action plan of how development could be achieved, the *Rio Declaration on Environment and Development*; a document consisting of 27 principles intended to guide *sustainable development* in the world, and the *Forest principles*¹; a document that gives recommendations for conservation and sustainable development forestry.

Most of the misunderstanding pertaining the concept of *sustainable development* is directed to how it can be executed and measured. In an extensive review of the subject, Parris and Kate (2005) assessed how *sustainable*

¹ Full name of the document: “Non-Legally Binding Authoritative Statement of Principles for a Global Consensus on the Management, Conservation and Sustainable Development of All Types of Forests”

development is characterised and measured by different actors that are representative in the field. They compared how these actors understand the term of *sustainable development* and how they measure it. They concluded that one of the reasons why *sustainable development* has achieved limited progress is due to the lack of common understanding of the term and the confusion that this creates regarding what are its goals.

Adding to the misunderstanding of the term is the fact that, when talking about the environment, many challenges are not national but global. Stevens (2006) claims that there is only way to tackle the increasing environmental challenges: “only global, cross-cultural efforts will effect any significant change” (p. 441). The proliferation of free trade agreements between countries and the establishment of trade regions has also brought forward the question of the relationship between environment and the concept of free market. The association between the current global economic model and the environment also surfaces when studying corporate environmental communication. In the United States and Europe debates about the environment in the context of corporations focus on regulation, whether more is needed or if it is excessive.

If sustainability is, partially, about the environment and the environment necessarily involves nature, then the way in which different cultures experience and understand nature are crucial for sustainability. Some contend that there is a need to change how we speak about sustainability. Redcliff (2005) argues that at the end of last century “sustainable development evolved as a set of observations about nature, and our relations with it, but it was clear to many that the key to understanding this lay in the relationships that existed within and between human societies” (p. 218). The cultural and intercultural aspect to sustainability is clearly stated above, and this is an initial approach to understanding how place, communication and culture are deeply connected.

The purpose of this section was to provide a reference for the topics that will be approached in the coming sections. As shown above, *sustainable development* and sustainability are sometimes utilized as catchall terms that in the

best case could serve an ecological purpose and in the worst they would legitimate false claims of environmental performance.

3. Environmental communication

Communication about environmental matters has increased fast (Cantrill & Oravec, 1996). What is exactly considered *environmental communication* varies across academic disciplines and places. Therefore, it is necessary to establish how this concept and others related to it are being utilised; in this chapter I will introduce and define the key concepts utilized in this thesis. The purpose of the chapter is to understand how the process of communication in nature and about nature happens. The chapter is divided in three sections. Key concepts like *culture*, *nature*, *environment* and *place* can be ambiguous: in the first section of the chapter I will specify to what connotation they subscribe. The second section is an explanation of how the concept of *environmental communication* is constructed from several points of views. I will introduce different definitions of the concept *environmental communication* and explore ways in which humans communicate about and with nature. The third section of the chapter is a review of how nature can shape identity, and how nature can be constructed through culture and communication.

3.1 Place and nature: culture and environment

Place, *culture*, *nature*, and *environment* are polysemic concepts: they have different meanings in different contexts. Nevertheless, they are key concepts to understand environmental communication. For Carbaugh and Cerulli (2012), the concept of *place* is deeply basic and particularly special: it is understood as a concept that does not need to be considered only in abstract terms. Instead, the authors contend that *place* is concrete, particular, unique and physical. This interpretation coincides with that of Escobar (2001) for whom the concept of *place* “refers to the experience of, and from, a particular location with some sense of boundaries, grounds, and links to everyday practices” (p. 152.) Although Carbaugh and Cerulli’s conception of *place* recognizes a specific location, the authors claim that our experiences of *place* can also grow in “scope and scale” (2012, p. 3.) A similar notion was put forward by Escobar (2001) who claimed that “places

concatenate with each other to form regions, which suggests that porosity of boundaries is essential to place, as it is to local constructions and exchange” (2001, p. 144.) *Place* is therefore a particular location that could, in certain circumstances, transcend its frontiers.

The concept of *place* is relevant in the study of environmental matters, especially those dealing with contested interpretations of nature, identity, and culture. Cantrill (2004) claimed that specific *places* constitute complex geographic markers because they represent not only physical and social elements of the areas, but also memories and feelings attached to those locations (p. 154). Therefore, the notion of *place* is relevant when formulating ideas about nature and it also influences the way we understand others communicating about nature from their own *places*. Milstein et al. (2011) recognize a sense of deep unity between culture and nature. Their premise is that nature is “a socially integrated space that provides the grounding for human relations, and differs from dominant Western discourses that constitute nature as an entity separate from humans” (p. 486-487). In their view, communication and perception of nature is inseparable from *place* and social relations.

The *place* also influences how humans construct discourses about the environment. In his research about *place*-based resistance, Singer (2011) illustrates how myths related to the land are utilized rhetorically to resist absolute urbanization in South Los Angeles. He demonstrated how the drama documentary “The Garden” exposes rhetoric related to ethnicity, race, gender, and class that perpetuate unequal access to dominant myths (p. 344). According to Carbaugh and Cerulli (2012), those that take care of their *place* “learn from its own particular ways, and to speak knowledgably about that” (p. 4.) Even when originating from different academic fields, Singer as well as Carbaugh and Cerulli suggest that communication is basic to construct emplaced notions of nature and environment. In their elaborations, Singer (2011) uses the term “rhetoric” and Carbaugh and Cerulli (2012) utilize the word “speak.” Both terms are directly related to communication. *Place* affects culture so deeply that it is indeed an essential element of environmental communication.

Culture strongly determines our communicative behaviour, but when talking about the environment the concept of *place* takes precedence. The *places* in which we dwell have a strong influence in the way we communicate about the environment (Carbaugh & Cerulli, 2012). In his article about sense of self-in-place, Cantrill (2004) builds on Razee's (1996) geography of rhetoric to highlight how *environmental communication* is tied to *place*: "environmental communication can invariably be traced back to a focus upon different place-based exigencies" (Cantrill, 2004, p. 153). Carbaugh and Cerulli (2012) claimed that most of those who have written about the environment have *places* that have "captivated and held them." (p. 5). Instead of easily regarding them as cultural differences, it could be affirmed that variances in *environmental communication* are strongly influenced by *place* since "environmental communication is, inevitably, a placed-based form of communication" (Carbaugh & Cerulli, 2012, p. 17). In this perspective, a concrete *place* influences culture and communication, which in turn influence the discourse about nature and environment.

The questions around *place* that have influenced academic studies are, according to Morgan (2002), how *place* affects daily communication; how *place* is invoked as a sense of nostalgia; how metaphors of *place* work in communication; how the *places* we live are linked to identity; and how *place* organizes social narratives. The origin of some misunderstandings related to nature and discourses of environment is, partly, the negation of *place*. According to Escobar (2001), the "erasure of place has profound consequences for our understanding of culture, knowledge, nature, and economy" (p. 141). In addition, the author points out that omitting *place* from research and social life conditions theoretical and political views. Efforts to define what *place* means are necessary in ethnographic endeavours related to *culture*, *nature* and *environment*. In the last three decades, *place* became more important within the disciplines of anthropology, geography and political ecology, but it is not well represented in the contemporary academic debates about globalization. According to Escobar (2001) ignoring *place* is a consequence of the current international and economic organization.

"a reflection of the asymmetry that exist between the global and the local in much

contemporary literature on globalization, in which the global is associated with space, capital, history and agency while the local, conversely, is linked to place, labor, and tradition... (p. 155)

However, some have tried to reintroduce the concept of *place* to academic debate: those endorsing *place* both in academic and social life are researchers from the phenomenologist, poststructuralist feminist geography and political economy perspectives. The phenomenologists have pointed out the neglect of *place* in Western theory and in social and human science as well as the long-standing preference for the concept of space. *Place* is also linked to development. For instance, the other two perspectives mentioned above focus on criticizing the inequality in global power relations and the effects of these on *places*. Nevertheless, recognizing the existence of *place* does not mean to claim that *place* is closed, but to acknowledge that *places* have always experienced hybridization without necessarily becoming more local or global. (Escobar, 2001.) The definition of *place* that I utilize in this thesis is one that conceives it as specific locations that situate our thoughts, but “can grow in their scope and scale” (Carbaugh & Cerulli, 2012) to considering larger regions.

For Cresswell (2009) “Place is a meaningful site that combines location, locale, and sense of place.” (p. 1) This interpretation of *place* refers to physical and non-physical characteristics of the concept. Location is the most physical or concrete characteristic of *place*. It consists of an absolute and measurable point, for instance a coordinate. Locale is the way a *place* looks and what it consists of materially. Sense of place refers to the feelings and emotions that a place evokes. (Cresswell, 2009, p. 1.) This last aspect of *place* is essential for this thesis.

Sense of place is where the creative potential of *place* lies and probably the one aspect that shapes other concepts like culture and nature the most. Knowing a *place* is more than knowing its location or touching the elements that make up its locale, it is also feeling it, and that makes *place* even more relevant for humans. Carbaugh and Cerulli (2012) like Escobar (2001), link *place* to identity and culture. As will be illustrated later in this thesis, this relationship is important to understand the multiplicity of cultures that exist. Carbaugh and Cerulli (2012) argue that to understand different places one needs first to focus on knowing its own place

“through our various discourses of dwelling” (p. 17.) Escobar (2001) concludes that knowing the place and the identity forged through it can produce empowering results.

The knowledge of place and identity can contribute to produce different meanings — of economy, nature and each other — within the conditions of capitalism and modernity that surround it. (Escobar, 2001, p. 164)

If *place* aids in the production of different meanings about nature and the social world, then it is a concept that must be contemplated when speaking about the environment. *Place, culture, nature* and *environment* are intrinsically linked to each other, and it could be claimed that without *place* there is no anchor or base to construct *culture*.

There is a dichotomy between how culture is defined and utilized. From the anthropological approach, *culture* refers to the entire way of life, activities, beliefs, and customs of a people, group, or society (Williams, 1976, p. 80). One of the earliest definitions of *culture* is that proposed in 1871 by Tylor, who is considered the founder of British anthropology. He defined culture as “that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society” (Moore, 2004, p. 5.) Since it is generally believed that the concept of *culture* originated in anthropology, the definitions of *culture* alluded above deserve to be mentioned although the approach to *culture* that will be utilized throughout the thesis will be the one usually employed in the Ethnography of Communication tradition. From this perspective, *culture* can be synthesized as webs of shared meanings and values (Geertz, 1973), or the way in which a group of people communicate and behave. Thus, in the context of this thesis, *culture* will refer to beliefs, values, and behaviours that are shared and also spoken by a group of people, in this case, by the speech community of concern.

The difference between the definition of *culture* proposed by anthropology and that utilized in ethnography of communication studies is minimal when we consider the content of the concept, and slightly more significant when it is applied in each field. From the anthropological perspective the focus is on the elements

that make up or characterize a specific culture and how those elements might influence the behaviour of the members of that culture. From the communication perspective the focus is on how the members of that culture understand, create and reproduce cultural elements through speech, and how they further produce a meta-culture about how one must structure speech in that community. Philipsen (1990) stated that “each community has its own cultural values about speaking and these are linked to judgments of situational appropriateness.” (p. 11) From this perspective, *culture* comprises communication. However, situational appropriateness is not only related to beliefs and values about propriety and impropriety in a particular culture, but also to the way the community has agreed to communicate. Therefore, *culture* not only comprises, but it is also deeply intertwined with communication.

Through historically grounded and socially constrained uses of speech, a more general outcome is getting done: A culture is being put on display as people symbolize a common identity. This is done of course in various ways, because every social context or community is grounded deeply with its own roots. But each situation and community, through its unique patterns, situations, and uses of communication, says something about itself, displaying -what could be called- its cultural identity. (Carbaugh, 1990a, p. 1)

Values and beliefs are also expressed, produced and agreed upon while communicating. Carbaugh (1990a) asserts that communication is culturally patterned. The notion presupposes a “sense of shared identity or group membership that is not only affirmed or reaffirmed, but also created in contexts” (Carbaugh, 1990a, p. 5). Theoretical elaborations and methodologies to investigate this phenomenon have been advanced and developed by Carbaugh (2007a) who illustrates how, through certain methods, one is able to see the culture(s) in communication and communication in cultures.

Beside *place* and *culture*, another term to be defined is *nature*. Marafiotte & Plec (2006) analysed the relationship of *nature* with *culture* and concluded that some linguistic phenomena like heteroglossia and hybridisation can make the definition of this concept complex and contradictory. The authors mention how, when studying discourses about *nature* and environment, the concept of *nature* could be defined as a resource for human consumption, a setting for outer

recreation, or a site or living system that is or should be untouched by humans. (p. 50). On the other hand, Clarke and Oravec (2004) celebrate the multiplicity of possible meanings for these terms.

One of the intricacies of environmental studies is that there is no one definition of key words like environment, ecology or nature. There are certainly some benefits to such a lack of specificity, because it can break down ideologies of mastery and leave open alternative possibilities. Understanding how words are used differently, or how they play out in the environment, is a key step in creating better collective understanding and common ideology. (p. 3)

Several scholars of environmental communication agree that there is a difference in how *nature* or the *environment* is understood across cultures. For instance, Ells (2008) argued that although many believe that humanity is fully embedded in nature, Western philosophical (and religious) tradition challenge this notion, claiming men's rationality provides a privileged status over nature (p. 3). Eder (1996) claims that the "utilitarian relationship to nature has become the cultural norm" (p. 2). To identify how *nature* is different in each culture, attention can be focused on how it is defined. Some define it as an encompassing background for social interaction. For instance, Milstein et al. (2011) define nature as an "immersive space that provides the grounding, experiences, and material for social relations." (p. 487). This definition is very different from the Western view of nature that considers it a resource.

The symbiotic relationship between *culture* and communication is further enhanced and highlighted by *nature*. Marafiotte and Plec (2006) recommend to observe human communication in order to understand how discourses about *nature* reflect and influence *culture*: "We should also attend to the ways private, colloquial, or vernacular expressions of human-nature relationships reflect and shape knowledge, attitudes, and behaviour." (p. 49) *Nature* is reflected in culture because it is constructed through it. According to Grundmar and Stehr (2000), humans have influenced the concept of *nature* on a physical and intellectual level.

Nature, as we know and encounter it today, is in fact mainly a socio-cultural and socio-economic construct: it has been physically transformed by human interventions and appropriated culturally. (p. 170)

Culture and communication are present in the concept *nature* through an intellectual effort executed through language. As Chaloupka and McGregor (1993) suggested, “nature, like everything else we talk about, is first and foremost an artifact of language.” (p. 5) Kidner (2000) interprets and further highlights the role of language by stating that language not only represents *nature*, but also forms it (p. 340) Through this basic communicative endeavour humans perceive, define, transform, discuss and contend *nature*.

Researchers in fields like sociology coincide with the view that *nature* originates in social practice (see Macnaghten & Urry, 1995; 1998; Douglas, 1982). This interdisciplinary point of view is worth mentioning because it stresses values and communication. According to Grundmar and Stehr (2000), although sociology has failed to address the case of the environment, there are areas in which sociology has focused on the right questions, for instance, the “values and concerns” (Douglas & Wildavsky, 1982; Inglehart, 1990 in Grundmar & Stehr, 2000, p. 158) related to the environment, and “how are risks perceived and communicated?” (Jungermann et al., 1988; Kahnemann et al., 1982; Canan, 1996; Laska, 1993 in Grundmar & Stehr, 2000, p. 158).

Values were defined by Kluckhohn (1951a) as “A conception, explicit or implicit, distinctive of an individual or characteristic of a group, of the desirable which influences the selection from available modes, means and ends of action.” (p. 395). Schwartz (2013) described how theorists elaborated on the concept of “values” throughout the 20th century. The author explains that according to these theorists, 1) Values are beliefs tied inextricably to emotion, not objective, cold ideas; 2) Values are a motivational construct that refer to the desirable goals which people strive to attain; 3) Values are abstract goals different from norms and attitudes, which usually refer to specific actions, objects, or situations; 4) Values guide the selection or evaluation of actions, policies, people, and events (serving as a standards or criteria); 5) “Values are ordered by importance relative to one another. People’s values form an ordered system of value priorities that characterize them as individuals. This hierarchical feature of values also distinguishes them from norms and attitudes.” (Schwartz, 2013).

In their categorization of value orientations, Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961) singled out five common problems that all humans must solve. The authors claimed that the solutions to these challenges vary among different groups. “Value orientations” is a term that they preferred instead of “basic value system” or “highly generalized elements of culture” to refer to those principles that give order and direction to human behaviour (Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck, 1961, p. 4). The questions or challenges that the authors refer to are a) The character of humans (human nature orientation); b) Relation of humans to nature and supernature (man-nature orientation); c) Relationship of humans with time (time orientation); d) Modality of human activity (activity orientation); and e) Relationships of humans to each other (relational orientation) (1961, p. 11). The value orientations always reflect an ordered variation: a rank ordered variability of its alternatives (Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck, 1961, p. 10-11).

Value orientations	Range of Variations		
	Evil	Neutral (mutable)	Good
		Good-Evil (immutable)	
<i>Human nature orientation</i>			
<i>Man-nature orientation</i>	Subjugation to Nature	Harmony with Nature	Mastery over Nature
<i>Time orientation</i>	Past	Present	Future
<i>Activity orientation</i>	Being	Being in Becoming	Doing
<i>Relational orientation</i>	Lineality	Collaterality	Individualism

Table 1. *Value orientations with Range of Variations* as theorised by Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961).

The question of interest for this thesis is the “Man-nature orientation,” i.e. the relationship of humans with nature. For this question there are three possibilities or variations: 1) Submission (nature as dominant); 2) Harmony (no separation of man, nature, and supernature); and 3) Mastery (humans as dominant). Cultures can have different expressions of these three positions towards nature, and they can also have dominant and variant profiles. (Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck, 1961). However, the authors also point out that “In societies which are undergoing change

the ordering of preferences will not be clear-cut for some or even all the value orientations” (ibid, 1961, p. 10). To prove their theory, Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck studied and compared five cultures located in a geographically close area: Mormon, Navaho, Texan, Spanish-American and Zuni. The Mormon village and Texan homestead community are English-speaking groups and the least different from each other whereas the Navaho Indian, the Zuni pueblo, and the Spanish-American village are very different from each other and from the two English-speaking groups.

The authors found out that the culture that shows a definite sign of the submissive position in its orientation towards nature is the community of Spanish-Americans in the US Southwest. (Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck, 1961). In this thesis I will further refer to this community as the “New Mexico Hispanics” (Milstein et al., 2011, p. 7). According to Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck, the New Mexico Hispanics approach this area of life and also others with fatalism and a resignation to the “inevitable,” whereas the Navaho Indians and the Mormon communities show a variation of Harmony with nature. Mastery-over-nature is exemplified by the researchers as the dominant position adopted by most Americans: it is the duty of humans to overcome difficulties. Mastery-over-nature entails overcoming “natural forces of all kinds” and regards nature as that to be “put to the use of human beings,” therefore in this position technology is emphasized. (1961, p. 13).

In this thesis I will utilize a connotation of *nature* that does not differentiate the terms *nature* and *environment* drastically, however, there are some nuances between the two concepts that need to be considered. To be consistent with the ethnography of communication tradition, I will adopt the definition provided by Milstein et al. (2011) that conceives *nature* as an “immersive space” that provides a setting for human interaction. Thus, when I refer to *nature* I am talking about a whole, and when I refer to the *environment* I mean a part of *nature* that humans have altered and which they manage for survival, production, or conservation. Throughout this thesis I utilize the term *environment* mostly as a reference, for instance, when quoting or when some of the participants utilize it. Instead, I will speak more about *nature*. My purpose is to follow the advice of previous

researchers that recognize the need “to include nature in an effort to hear the interaction of myriad voices of the ecosystems of which humanity is a part” (Milstein, 2009, p. 347). *Nature* will therefore be a sort of hub concept: one that links concepts related to environmental communication.

The connotation of *environment* that I utilize throughout this thesis is closer to the one commonly identified as “Western” (i.e. having its origins in Western civilization and adopting its worldview). A brief explanation of the concept of Western civilization is that proposed by Spielvogel (2011) who defined it as that way of life developed in European territories conquered by the Romans and in which their cultural and political ideas were spread. Milstein (2009) describes the word *environment* as one shaped by Western historical and contemporary relations with nature: a symbol utilized in Western culture to render the natural world a surrounding entity of a material nature (p. 346). The definition and connotations of *environment* as understood from a Western point of view do not always look idealistic. Turner argued that from the Western perspective “the natural environment is valuable only insofar as it serves some direct human purpose.” (2006, p. 477). Therefore it is crucial to keep in mind that the Western view of *nature* and *environment* reflects only one interpretation. Nofri (2011) concluded, “‘environment’ is nothing but ‘nature’ seen through the lens of a specific culture.” (p. 49.) Nevertheless, when I use a connotation of *nature* or *environment* that radically differs from that of the Western canon, I will mention that the term coincides with the interpretations of *nature* conceived by other ways of life.

Another aspect to clarify regarding the use of the term *environment* is how it could be conceived in multiple ways depending on how we understand it. Clarke and Oravec (2004) already warned us about the problematic results that polysemic words produce: “Certainly, through their multiple uses, words create situations of miscommunication and opportunities for hegemonic euphemism.” (p. 3). Carbaugh (2007c) analysed how the term *environment* is written by Cox (2007) within quotation marks and concluded that when we write or speak about the environment we are in fact “quoting the environment, serving as a spokespersons for what it -

that is, the world- has indeed already “said”” (p. 67). Although in different ways, both Cox and Carbaugh prove that the term *environment* is highly ambiguous.

The concepts of *place*, *nature*, *culture* and *environment* are closely intertwined. However, the way these concepts are related to each other is not always straightforward. The concepts can be related in several ways, for instance, a *place* can be in the nature, or in can be located where *nature* is appreciated in certain way. *Culture* is a key defining factor of how *nature* is seen and approached. However, according to Milstein (2009), not only *culture* but also the context influences how we communicate about *nature*.

Many environmental communication theories include the assumption that human representations of nature, be they verbal or nonverbal, public or interpersonal, face-to-face or mediated communication, are *interested*. This, in part, means that communication about nature is informed by social, economic, and political contexts and interests. These contexts and interests help to shape our communication, often in ways we are unaware of, and direct us to see nature through particular lenses while also obscuring other views of nature. (p. 345)

Environment is the concept that incorporates the other three concepts. It is, like Nofri (2011) stated, *nature* seen through a *culture*. And the method by which *nature* can be seen is emplaced communication: communication in a specific location, by a specific community, through a specific language. Like Carbaugh and Cerulli (2012) affirmed “environmental communication is, inevitably, a place-based form of communication” (p. 14). This is the kind of communication environmental communication scholars are interested in (Cantrill, 2004), and it is the communication that I will explore in the next section.

3.2 Discussing, constructing and protecting *nature*

Communication can shape our understanding of the natural world because it is the mechanism used to perceive nature (see Milstein, 2011). According to Carbaugh (1990b), communication is the main process “through which social life is created, maintained, and transformed” (p. 18). Senecah (2004) considers that Oravec’s publication about framing and power of arguments in 1984 was a clear emergence of the subject of *environmental communication*. In the field of communication, talking about nature is conceived as *environmental communication*

(Carbaugh & Cerulli, 2012; Marafiotte & Plec, 2006; Milstein; 2008; 2009). However, not only speech but also textual productions about nature can be considered *environmental communication*. As Muir (1996 in Cantrill, 2004) argued, “powerful images influence our awareness of nature, shape our expectations for outdoor experiences, and constrain the way in which we approach political decisions about the future of our environment” (p. 156). Other researchers also support the notion of communication being constitutive of our understanding of nature. Cox (2013) borrows the concept of symbolic action advanced by Burke (1966) to contend that language and symbols create meaning and shape our understanding about environment and the natural world.

Communication can influence human beliefs, behaviours, attitudes and even policies about *nature*. Milstein (2009) states that those that study *environmental communication* focus on communication about nature “because they believe that such communication has far-reaching effects” (p. 344). Nevertheless, these effects can also be constrained by the specific way in which *environmental communication* is done. Carbaugh (1990b) states that, since communication is cultural, some voices and positions are legitimized while others are not. Similarly, Cox (2013) affirms that communication about nature “invites a particular perspective, evokes certain values (and not others)” (p. 19) Therefore the importance of understanding *environmental communication* in practice and in communication research, putting especial attention to how it is conducted within speech cultures.

Although *environmental communication* has been studied in the field of communication for several years, there are different approaches to its study. The two main approaches are that of humans communicating about the natural environment (see Carbaugh & Cerulli, 2012; Cox, 2013), and that of humans communicating with *nature* (see Scollo, 2004). In addition, when talking about *environmental communication* there are three different levels of abstraction. One refers to the field of study within the academic field of communication; the other to concrete texts like news, reports, policy documents, movies, studies and other messages exhorting to consciousness or action; and another refers to everyday

conversations that reflect the way humans construct *nature* through interpersonal communication. Since many different topics are studied within the subject of *environmental communication*, Cox (2013) argues that the field can seem confusing at first. Although it is challenging to define a broad concept like *environmental communication*, it is necessary to have a clear idea of how the concept will be utilized throughout this thesis. Next I will explore more approaches to *environmental communication* and some definitions given to it.

In communication, one key approach to the study *environmental communication* is the one that highlights the role of communication in its linguistic and cultural dimensions. This notion is advanced by Carbaugh and Cerulli (2012) who aim to use and develop a perspective that is “reflexively grounded in place, explores human relations with nature, while embracing cultural and linguistic variability in these processes” (p. 5). Other researchers in the field propose similar approaches to *environmental communication* (see Cox, 2013; Milstein, 2011). One approach that takes into consideration both linguistic and cultural aspects of communication is, for instance, Carbaugh and Cerulli’s (2012) work that demonstrates how the environment is constructed and used as a discourse. The authors draw upon existing methods like CuDA (Cultural Discourse Analysis) (see Carbaugh, 2007) to study place-based communication (talk) about nature. Their main argument is that *environmental communication* is “place-based communication” (Carbaugh & Cerulli, 2012, p. 14) that happens in one physical location and through certain cultural lens.

Although the CuDA as a method is novel for the ethnographic study of the environment, the idea of *environmental communication* being a discursive construction is not new. Cox (2013) mentions that already at the end of the 20th several scholars (Eder, 1996; Evernden, 1992; Haraway, 1991; Latour, 2004; Ross, 1994) had begun to describe the discourses that shape views about nature. Nevertheless, these authors do not provide a concrete method to “know, analyze, describe, interpret, and reflect” (Carbaugh & Cerulli, 2012, p. 14) the way in which discourses about nature are constructed. Instead, they offer criticism, cultural studies and historical narrations about the relationship of mankind to nature. For

instance, Eder (1996) offers a sociological recount of the phenomenon by conducting a “systematic discourse analysis of environmentalism” (Eder, p. 6).

Both Eder (1996) and Evernden (1992) highlight the symbolic content of nature, and Haraway (1991) claims that nature is constructed and not discovered. The other authors, Latour (2004) and Ross (1994) do speak about notions related to communication, the former about “articulation” (p. 6) and the latter about “cultural studies in the broader sense” (p.18) and about media images that constitute a “popular consciousness” (p.18). It is clear that the main approaches to the study of *environmental communication* are the approach of the Ethnography of Communication tradition and the one of the Rhetorical perspective. Both borrow from Burke’s idea of communication as symbolic action (1966), however, in the Ethnography of Communication, the focus is on the speech community whereas the rhetorical perspective (Cox, 2013) focuses on the “language choices” (p. 63), and “highlights the purposeful and consequential uses of the resources of language.” (p. 76). The difference between the two perspectives needs to be acknowledged since even the terminology utilized by each tradition differs.

The recent evolution of *environmental communication* research has been outlined by Morgan (2002), who explains how the field moved from rhetorical analysis of environmental conflicts to the notion of communication as constituting the natural environment. The author highlights how it was the novel work by Cantrill and Oravec (1996) that set the tone for the new kind of *environmental communication* research. The novelty of the publication edited by Cantrill and Oravec’s rested in its varied epistemological perspectives and theoretical traditions (Morgan, 2002). Other researchers like Carbaugh (2007c) gladly welcomed the move away from a rhetorical path that could lead to what he considers “a “prison-house” of language, rhetorical terms and tropes that stand over and between our relation with nature’s world.” (p. 66). Nevertheless, some recent work in *environmental communication* still focuses on rhetorical analysis (see Benulic, 2011; Cox, 2007; 2013).

Researchers from fields like sociology, natural sciences, and traditions within communication studies like rhetoric have actively contributed to the

discussion about nature being a social construction (Cox, 2013). Communication as symbolic action is considered the main method for this process. However, from the ethnography of communication perspective, the discussion follows a separate path that seems to start with the premise that communication is cultural (Carbaugh, 1990a; 1990b). Nevertheless, since the avenues for research are ample, *environmental communication* is not closed to one tradition or perspective. This thesis follows the path of ethnography of communication and definitions and conceptions of *environmental communication* from this tradition will take precedence. When utilizing the term *environmental communication* in this thesis I will clarify to what approach or denotation I am referring to, for instance, to human communication about *nature*, the academic field of study or, possibly, the practical or professional connotation of the term.

Another approach to *environmental communication* supports the idea that the role of communication is not limited to create and communicate *nature* among humans, but communication can also exist between humans and nature. Scollo, 2011 studied the non-verbal way in which nature can “speak” to humans and concluded: “there is a set of largely nonverbal forms of communication that people use to connect with the natural world” (p. 246). Nevertheless, humans are largely unaware that nature “speaks” because *nature* has been represented as a mute, separated entity in the background, or as an object (Milstein, 2009). Other research about human communication with *nature* in the field of communications is the empirical research about “Blackfeet listening” conducted by Carbaugh (2009): the results showed that a form of non-verbal communication and listening can sensitize people to relationships between the natural and human and between places and persons. Taking into consideration non-verbal communication is considered an innovation in *environmental communication* scholarship that goes beyond the human-centred perspective that dominated discourses about *nature* in the past.

In situating nature as an integrated and dynamic communicatory participant that has a role in mediating human–nature relations, environmental communication scholars explore ways of understanding and articulating environmental co-presence. This more recent theoretical move in environmental communication scholarship is an attempt not only to explain but also to subvert anthropocentric and hierarchical articulations of human–nature relations. (Milstein, 2009, p. 347)

The position of considering nature as a partner in communication is a theoretical move that contemporary researchers welcome. For instance, Rogers (1998) claimed that constitutive theories of communication have ignored and treated nature as an object. Understanding *environmental communication* not only as a way to talk about nature, but also as talking with nature moves the discussion away from the view of humans constructing nature that has dominated research. If nature is a partner in communication then it must exist independent of social constructions. Carbaugh (2007c) supported this position by claiming that there is a need to balance the two objectives of talking about the environment and also listening to what the environment says. Some researchers (see Blenkinsop & Piersol, 2013, p. 41; Carbaugh, 2009; Scollo, 2011) claim that nature speaks to humans in particular settings. Scollo (2011) advances that across cultures there is a set of nonverbal forms of communication between the nature and people, and that this connection between humans and nature reveals the spiritual nature of living beings and the unity of all living things.

One approach to human-nature communication is the one that contends that *place* not only influences *culture* and *communication*, but it can be one of the actors of the communication event. Carbaugh (1999) stated that, for some, places are capable of and in fact do speak if only people and scholars commit to engage in the communication. Nevertheless, although most places communicate something, not just any place communicates something significant. Carbaugh (1999) argues that there are places that have three characteristics that make them ideal for listening: naturalistic beauty, solemnity, and historical traditions. The author highlights the importance of listening in order to engage in communication with these special and eloquent places. Nevertheless, in this communication, the humans respond actively to the “speaking form” of nature and recreate the places by the “listening form” (Carbaugh, 1999, p. 258).

Besides different approaches to *environmental communication*, there are also different ideas about its purpose. According to Ells (2008), *environmental communication* researchers study the practice and critique of environmental discourse “in all media for all potential purposes” (p. 3). *Environmental*

communication, Cox argues, serves two different functions: the pragmatic function; to educate, alert, persuade, mobilize and help solve environmental problems, and the constitutive function; construct, represent nature and environmental problems as subjects for understanding. (2013, p. 20-21). According to Mark Meisner, executive director of the International Environmental Communication Association (IECA), *environmental communication* is about “discussing, debating, educating and advocating...a field of study and an activity/phenomenon.”²

Flor (2004) and Cox (2013) share similar views about the models of communication developed during the 20th century being obsolete for *environmental communication*. Cox (2013) contrasts communication as symbolic action with the model proposed at the beginning of the 20th century by Shannon and Weaver and argues that Kenneth Burke’s concept is more suitable for the study of *environmental communication*. Griffin (2009) exhorts young communication students to acknowledge the contribution of the classics of communication, but claims that some of communication studies most creative approaches are the newest. Like Morgan (2002) explained in his doctoral dissertation, those approaches relevant for *environmental communication* are not the exception.

The study and practice of *environmental communication* can also be approached from the organizational or corporate point of view. Most of the research about this topic follows the rhetorical tradition (see Feller, 2004; Fredriksson, 2008; Ihlen, 2009). Cox (2013) identifies corporations as one of the voices that communicate about environmental issues. According to Benulic (2011), “how the values of a company are linked to environmental values and responsibility is conveyed through corporate environmental communication” (p. 4). The objective of some industries is to join the popular support for the environment by “linking corporate goals and behaviours to popular environmental values,” (Cox, 2013, p. 286) and to avoid additional environmental regulations.

This corporate perspective raises suspicions in authors like Ross (1994) who contends that sustainable development -a term he considers became the mantra for corporations during the 1990s- is a contradiction of terms. The author is

² <https://theieca.org/what-environmental-communication>

also sceptic of corporations that adopt ecological stances, calling this phenomenon “free-market environmentalism.” (p. 3)

Environmental concerns have not only come to be represented by a permanent department of corporate operations (every large company has its own environmental manager, along with its string of scientists, lawyers and MBAs specializing in environmental areas). (Ross, 1994, p. 3)

Even those doing research in the field display a strong scepticism against corporate rhetoric about sustainable development and environmental responsibility. Benulic (2011) studied what Ross (2004) called free market environmentalism and argued that: “the use of environmental terms in corporate environmental communication does not ensure that companies are contributing to sustainable development.” (p. 7) Nevertheless, the study of what is known as *corporate environmental communication* has recently become more visible both in academics (see Benulic, 2011; Feller, 2004) and business and it is now a common way of approaching the subject of *environmental communication*. From this perspective, corporations are considered “rhetors” (Benulic, 2011, p. 9) that produce material for analysis. In her master’s thesis, Benulic (2011) refers to *corporate environmental communication* both as a tool used for public relations and also as the concrete material produced for that purpose, such as annual and environmental reports, press releases, advertisements, web content and product information.

In organizations, a problem related to the practice of *environmental communication* is the lack of effective communication, regarding both the messages (content) and channels. Several studies conclude that communication about environmental topics could be better, for instance by having more consistent information between narratives and actions (see Feller, 2004; Benulic, 2011) and by adopting a uniform reporting system within industries (see Cerin, 2002). Other suggestions are related to how the information is presented and how the messages should be clear and concise not only for the consumers but also for the staff of an organization (Pihkola et al., 2010). One observation about the effectiveness of communication about the environment among consumers is that it is often complicated to understand. Environmental attributes might be difficult to detect or the consumer does not know about label procedures. In addition, the terminology

used in the text, the layout of the label or even its size and legibility might make it difficult to understand. (D'Souza et al., 2006).

Journalists also face communication challenges, for instance, regarding keeping the balance between simplifying the information to be able to tell the story and keeping the rigour when explaining complex facts. In addition, they need to deal with challenges to conduct investigation and to not rely on ready-made communication and PR. (Nofri, 2011). On the other hand, scientific information also needs to be stressed. Nofri (2011) claims that in most of the European press communication about the environment is mostly discussed from the societal and political point of view and less from the factual point of view (p. 363). According to Cameron (2003), the practice of *environmental communication* has not fully become a professional endeavour.

Some of the problems that effect environmental communications activities can be attributed to the fact that they are often characterised by improvisation, last minute fixes, intuitive responses to changing events and initiatives that are launched on a case by case basis. (p. 5)

Even when the situations described above are practical challenges, they provide insights about the possibilities to expand previous theory and practices about *environmental communication* in the organizational or corporate realm. To these issues within the practice of *corporate environmental communication*, we might add that people involved in its production – journalists, experts, businessmen, activists, researchers – also come from different places, thus have different ideas about what exactly is *environmental communication*.

Besides multiple approaches to *environmental communication*, there are also several definitions and conceptions of the concept. One definition of *environmental communication* is “the application of communication approaches, principles, strategies and techniques to environmental management and protection” (Flor, 2004). This definition is one that conceives communication as a support for environmental activism. Ells (2008) provides not only a more comprehensive definition (since it considers the past, present and future of nature) than the one provided by Flor (2004), but also one more focused on research.

Environmental Communication, which encompasses the study or performance of all discourse pertaining to the history, present condition, and plausible future of the biosphere, the solid, liquid, and gaseous shell of Earth wherein all living beings interact with minerals, waters, atmospheres, and one another in short, what is generally called the environment. (Ells, 2008, p. 2-3)

With their different foci, Ells' and Flor's conceptions of *environmental communication* represent the ambiguous way in which the term can be applied. Ells' explanation seems more neutral since it is focused on the study of discourses about the environment, whereas Flor's conceives communication as an effective tool for environmental action. The dichotomy between practice or activism and research in *environmental communication* studies is clearly visible when we take into consideration Ells' and Flor's ideas. Ells focuses mostly on research in order to understand different phenomena, while the aim of Flor's research seems to be both to understand and to advance environmental activism. Others that have studied *environmental communication* strive for balance between research and environmental activism (see Carbaugh & Cerulli, 2012; Morgan, 2002). Although their texts do reflect personal convictions about nature or the environment, their aim is to bring light to the way in which nature and environment are constructed through communication. In his doctoral dissertation, Morgan (2002) clarifies that his main purpose is to produce theory before conducting studies with an "interventionist stance" (p. 7).

Some definitions of *environmental communication* highlight human communication. For instance, Corbett (2006) defines it as "the various ways we communicate about the natural world" (p. 2). Flor (2004) refers to the relevance and utility of human communication when he affirms that *environmental communication* is guided by the principle that states that the goal of human communication is mutual understanding. However, this position seems to ignore the cultural aspect of communication and how it could affect this mutual understanding. Other definitions of *environmental communication* highlight the symbolic aspect of communication, such is the case with the one provided by Cox (2013).

“the pragmatic and constitutive vehicle for our understanding of the environment as well as our relationships to the natural world; it is the symbolic medium that we use in constructing environmental problems and negotiating society’s different responses to them” (p. 20).

This definition is a clear continuation of the rhetoric perspective. It stresses the pragmatic aspect of communication in understanding and building the environment, and as a tool to negotiate society’s responses to environmental challenges. However, it does not provide a view of what aspect of human communication and culture could influence these rhetorical elaborations about nature and the environment. Carbaugh (2007c) contends that Cox focuses strongly on shift in terms like “global warming/climate dislocation” or “exotic species/invasive species” and in doing so stresses a verbal part while forgoing the bigger picture, or like Carbaugh (2007c) calls it “the larger parcel on which it is dependent” (p. 65). Focusing exclusively on rhetorical analysis can be a distraction from more significant factors involved in environmental discourses. Carbaugh (2007c) directly criticizes this stand: “apparently, the ability to verbally interpret the larger parcel plods along well behind the rhetoric of the part – as when our terms focus on endangered species over their communities.” (p. 65) Carbaugh’s review of Cox’s (2007) meticulous rhetorical analyses succeeds in illustrating the difference of approaches between those that study *environmental communication* from the rhetorical and cultural communication point of view.

Carbaugh (2007c) sheds lights on the way in which the exclusive and heavy use of verbal interpretations “of what each issue indeed is” (p. 65) does not provide a satisfactory picture of the subject of *environmental communication*. Carbaugh (2007c) reflects on the first of the three tenets by Cox (2007) “‘Environment’ imbricates material and social/symbolic resources” (p.12) and places most of the attention on the terms utilized by the author and how some words or phrases are, in some cases, marked in quotations. The main idea of Cox (2007), in his first tenet, is to stress the polysemic characteristic of the word “environment” and its undeniable connection to the natural world. Oravec and Clarke (2004) stressed the importance of aiming to understand the possibly complicated terms that need to be dealt with when studying *environmental communication*.

Understanding the power of *key words* used to describe our environment can help us better understand how to build on common ground as we work together to approach environmental problems. (p. 3-4)

Indeed there is a need for understanding the power of key words utilized in environmental communication, and the process to achieve this understanding requires pondering both the denotation and connotation of a word or phrase. Evernden (1992) makes a similar apology of definitions and meanings in her study about nature, “the examination of nature must entail not simply the objects we assign to that category, but also the category itself: the concept of nature, its origins and implications.” (p. xi) However, as Carbaugh (2007c) points out, the study of words and definitions constitutes a piece of a puzzle and does not provide a realistic solution for pressing environmental issues: “we stand on the beach staring at a starfish, before realizing we are about to be consumed by a tsunami” (p. 65). Carbaugh’s (2007c) main argument is to go beyond words and our representations of it. Instead of constructing key terms like *environment* the author proposes to deconstruct them, in fact he claims that the “verbal or social ‘construction metaphor’ can be overworked, all of us being wordsmiths while losing sight (and sense) of the raw materials that are the subjects in our constructions” (p. 67). Therefore the need to understand not only key terms, but also “what” is behind them.

The connotation of *environmental communication* that will take precedence in this thesis, i.e. my perspective, is that of situated human communication *about nature* (see Carbaugh & Cerulli, 2012). The main tenet of this approach is that *nature* is created in a situated interaction through communication. The authors claim that *environmental communication* is strongly influenced by individual and communitarian beliefs and values about nature or natural places. For this study, this is the conception of *environmental communication* that could provide more insights into what is behind environmental rhetoric. In the next section I outline notions of *nature* that take into consideration the terms humans use to talk about it, as well as the values and beliefs they hold about *nature*.

3.3 Nature: shaping identity and shaped by culture

The concept of *nature* is conceived as a social construction (Kidner, 2000). Ross (1994) contends that ideas about *nature* often stem from ideas about society. Nevertheless, *nature* as a reality can acquire an active voice in environmental communication when it engages us in a recursive intellectual act of learning. Just then, Carbaugh (2007c) argues, it challenges us to listen, speak about it and follow our words.

Nature speaks, we listen, we somehow learn, we struggle to put what we have learned into words, but we are forever frustrated by the process, thus we return to nature, and forever enjoy the spiral - it's never really a simple cycle since we learn something each time- all over again. A challenge this poses for all of us is to open our understanding to the world beyond our words, beyond our representations of it, to learn anew from it, and to be in a position better to speak about what we come to know and thus to act accordingly. (p. 68)

Although education is stressed as the final result of communication, the actions of *nature* and “us” described by Carbaugh also constitute culture. We listen to nature, we learn and we communicate, but we do all these within the parameters of our own language and culture. Ross (1994) insists on the way the concept of *nature* is conditioned by culture, “What we know about nature is what we know and think about our own cultures” (p. 15). *Culture* understood as education or socialization into a certain way of behaving and being influences the way we communicate. Cultural premises and preferences shape the way conversations are structured and personal interactions managed (Carbaugh & Poutiainen, 2005, p. 36). The importance of *culture* within the study of environmental communication is often ignored or underestimated. Perhaps it is assumed that globalization will make communication about the environment uniform, and that cultural differences could finally and conveniently be dismissed. After conducting research of *environmental communication* in several European countries, Nofri (2011) concluded that each of them “have all own environmental traditions and specific cultures of understanding and communicating what ‘environment’ represents” (p. 15).

We can speak about a *place* utilising our own cultural and communicational devices, but Carbaugh and Cerulli (2012) proposed that communication and culture

are basic requirements to understand places and affirmed that: “communication is an emplaced action that is culturally distinctive, socially negotiated, and individually applied” (p. 8). Kidner (2000) contends that one of the reasons why environmental writers do not write about “the ecological credentials of different societies” (p. 353) is because constructionism has eliminated the need to consider our views about the environment compared to the views of other cultures.

What has happened here is that since we have lost touch with any frame broader than that defined by our language and our social “reality,” anything beyond this “reality” will necessarily seem unreal, invalid, or nonexistent. (p. 354)

Culture is relevant in the study of environmental communication because its practice involves discussing with those from differing cultures. The study and practice of environmental communication clearly shows that there is no uniformity in environmental communication. One of the origins of this lack of common understanding originates from the fact that a lack of shared experience in place can prohibit certain ways of speaking (Carbaugh & Cerulli, 2012, p. 15). Variances in the way we speak about the natural environment are a consequence of the fact that “communication is around the world what particular people have made of it, and their resources for the making vary greatly” (Carbaugh & Cerulli, 2012, p. 7). This indicates that the differences in environmental communication are strongly influenced by culture, since cultural characteristics themselves influence communication. Cultural variations within environmental communication also become evident in a study carried out by Flor (2004) in which it was shown that indigenous groups are not able to cognitively grasp concepts or terms such as “environmental education”, “environmental awareness” nor “environmentally friendly.” For members of these groups, the phrases mentioned above are redundant or irrelevant since they are not part of their knowledge and belief systems and practices. Flor (2004) concluded that indigenous cultures are a living example of Thoreau’s ecological thought: that man and nature, man and his environment are one. (Flor, 2004, p. 15-16).

As culture is closely related to the places dwelled for longer or shorter period of time, so is identity. In his study of Blackfeet cultural discourses,

Carbaugh and Rudnick (2006) illustrate how the way places are understood is also a way of bringing forward “ways of living there” (p. 183). A quote from the introduction of the Blackfeet tourist guide into the part of land that borders the reservation and was converted into what is now Glacier National Park, illustrate how identity can be modified both by *nature* and by specific conceptions of *nature*.

The agreement that we ultimately signed does reserve unto us various rights that we can exercise over here in the park, for example, the right to cut wood and take timber, the right to hunt. [...] And they didn't understand that our relationship with the land was such that we viewed the park the same way that they viewed the park, that we wanted it kept the way it was, that it represented who we were and what we were for all time. (Blackfeet guide in Carbaugh & Rudnick, 2006, p. 172)

Culture is thus a strong determinant in how an individual frames environmental messages. Carbaugh and Cerulli (2012) mention how Manhattan developers, Native Americans elders, Yucatec film-makers, and Finnish environmentalists differ in the way they speak about the environment. “Their making is profoundly, to some important degree, always morally infused and localized” (Carbaugh & Cerulli, 2012, p. 7). The authors introduced the concepts of *place* and *culture* as determinant factors in the way we understand and speak about the environment.

Just as the study of *nature* is a prerequisite to study environmental communication, communication practices are also a condition to understand the “environmental” expressive system: “practice and place provide a context for the other” (Carbaugh & Cerulli, 2012, p. 8). The authors justify their propositions by bringing forward literature that has demonstrated the power of language in formulating cultural discourses. According to them, cultural discourses of dwelling include a range of communication practices, but one special form of communication deserves a more careful attention: that of verbal depictions of nature (p. 11).

Those speaking about nature also speak about themselves, and vice versa. In their research about Finnish quietness as a natural way of being, Carbaugh, Berry and Nurmikari-Berry (2006) describe the Finnish way of “spending time by myself.” The excerpt below alludes to notions of privacy, nature and personhood.

I will spend a week in the summer cottage in order to be “omissa oloissaan” [to spend time by myself]. Those present will include me, and perhaps my friend. The goal is to let other people know you want to be alone without anybody disturbing you. This is a very commonly used word. It describes a state of mind, when you want to calm down, get away from the hectic life and be alone with your thoughts. (Carbaugh et al., 2006, p. 210)

Carbaugh et al. (2006) also interpreted this need for being in its own thoughts as part of local meanings and morals about politeness and privacy. Another excerpt from the same research focuses on privacy.

Marja put it this way:

We like our territory undisturbed...When you are keeping your distance from others then you are not intruding somebody else's privacy, but you are not allowing anybody to intrude your privacy either. It's like having these big bubbles that nobody is intruding. Keep the distance. (Carbaugh et al., 2006, p. 211)

Although the concept of respect is not mentioned in the two previous excerpts, below, another participant's comments refer to privacy and keeping distance as a matter of respect:

As Mervi put it:

I associate privacy with respecting other people. We appreciate when people are not talking but listening. We Finns do not think it is impolite to be just quiet in a group. I see privacy as a positive and associate privacy with space which people need for living. We might even enjoy being alone and that is why we do not want to interrupt others by talking all the time. Privacy is being alone in a good way. (Carbaugh et al., 2006, p. 211)

The phrase mentioned in the excerpt above “being alone in a good way,” means that one uses time for thinking and to formulate own thoughts, focus and reflect. During such time one is allowed to reflect about things, think and reflect (2006, p. 214). Carbaugh et al. (2006) identified the activities that are involved when positively being alone: “figuring things out by yourself,” “a form of meditation,” “one moment of concentration,” “resting,” “peace of mind and balance,” “focusing your mental energy,” and “reflection.” The authors further grouped these activities under the concept of “mietiskellä (contemplation, meditation, reflection)” and defined the practice as that of being undisturbed in one's thoughts. One cultural

proposition put forward by Carbaugh et al. (2006) is that “being alone in one’s thoughts, quiet and silent (“hiljaa”), makes it possible to “mietiskellä” (contemplation, meditation, reflection).” (p. 213).

The purpose of this section was to provide a theoretical and methodological background for the topic of environmental communication. Another objective was to outline different definitions and perspectives of environmental communication. The next section will describe the data collected for this thesis and the methodologies applied to answer the research questions.

4. Data and Methodologies

In this section I explain the data collected, the methodology utilized to analyse it and I also provide a brief background of the company studied. In the second part I explain the structure of the interview guide followed during the interviews. Next I outline the background of the participants and describe the data collected through semi-structured interviews. In the third and last section I illustrate the main tenets of CuDA (Cultural Discourse Analysis) and how I applied it to the data of concern. I also provide a detailed description of the interviews and how the fact that they were conducted in a foreign language affected both the process of the interview and the quality and richness of the data obtained.

4.1 Research questions

Environmental communication is a subject that has been studied in politics, communication, and sociology. However, there is little research about the way in which nature is discussed, for instance, within businesses. The objective of this thesis is to examine cultural communication within a group of seven professionals of the environment working in UPM, a global forest company with headquarters in Helsinki, Finland. The research question aims to identify and analyse the cultural discourses present in the communication of environmental professionals.

- What beliefs and values about nature, personhood, and relationships do the Finnish professionals of the environment express in their cultural discourse about nature?

To answer the research question I will proceed to identify the cultural discourses and further examine their elements in more detail. The research question will be answered by examining the way the participants communicate about nature, the environment, their job and UPM, the company they work for. Other questions that I will answer are related to the relationship of the Finnish participants to the places that they dwell in nature. Intracultural and intercultural questions (for instance the

use of stereotypes) will also be answered by analysing the participants' talk about other cultures and their beliefs about identity.



UPM is divided in nine businesses that include production of pulp and paper, energy, biofuels, timber, forestry, as well as labels and other derivatives. This forest and paper company has a long history in Finland. Its current name is the result of a merger of paper companies: UPM was established in the autumn of 1995 when Kymmene Corporation, Repola Ltd and its subsidiary United Paper Mills Ltd merged. The new company, UPM-Kymmene, officially started its operations in 1996. Something particular about this company is that during the last five years it has been engaged in renewing its identity in order to become “The Biofore Company” in order to participate in the bioeconomy as part of an industry sector focused on sustainability and innovative use of the biological materials provided by the forest.

Recently, UPM has been listed as the industry leader in the Dow Jones European and World Sustainability Indices (DJSI) for three consecutive years. The company has also engaged in innovative research in biomaterials such as that conducted to produce the “Biofore Concept Car.” This is designed and manufactured in partnership with Helsinki Metropolia University of Applied Sciences and the Finnish Funding Agency for Technology and Innovation.

4.2 Data and its collection

The data analysed in this thesis was collected through semi-structured in-depth interviews conducted from May to September 2013. In total, seven face-to-face interviews lasting from 40 to 65 minutes were recorded digitally. The interviews were conducted in Finnish language and were translated from Finnish to English and transcribed in English. The participants were contacted by email: out of ten persons invited, seven responded positively by agreeing to be interviewed. The interviews took place in the premises of UPM, usually in a meeting room but sometimes in an office.

The interview guide consisted of 22 questions divided in three sections (see *Appendix 1* for Finnish and *Appendix 2* for English version of the guide). The first section of the interview guide included questions about nature such as what the respondents consider nature to be, what special moments they have spent in nature, and what they do in nature. The second section of interview guide was about the profession of the interviewees and the third about their colleagues and the company where they work. In most cases the interview guide was provided before the interview in order for the respondents to familiarize with the questions. Nevertheless, in those cases that the guide was not provided, the respondents still answered the questions rigorously. Although some respondents wanted to follow it strictly, the interview guide was intended and functioned as a guide for the interview. This freedom allowed the respondents and interviewer to explore topics that were not explicitly mentioned in the guide, therefore, the data collected was of a richer nature. While interviewing I focused my interest in the words, concepts, themes expressed by the participants, especially those that included insights about the topic(s) of concern.

The challenges related to data collection are mostly related to language. To obtain as much information and identify key cultural terms the interviews were conducted in Finnish, a native language for the interviewees and a foreign language for me. Some participants doubted whether I was able to conduct the interviews in Finnish and politely indicated their willingness to do it in English language. As a persuasive mechanism one of the participants even mentioned his familiarity and close friendship with an English-speaking foreigner in Finland. Nevertheless, I assured the participant that the interview must be conducted in Finnish, that I had an intermediate level command of the language, and that I would appreciate the willingness to speak English in case I couldn't understand something mentioned during the conversation.

In the next subsections I will provide an account of the way I conducted the interviews and the issues that I encountered in the process. I will mention why I consider the interview more like a discussion or conversation. Several issues that

characterize the interaction between interviewee and interviewed will be disclosed as a way to exercise reflexivity.

Interviews

I conducted in-depth qualitative interviews, and according to Rubin & Rubin (2012) this is a research method that consists of talking to those with knowledge or experience about a topic of concern. The method is suitable in ethnography of communication since “researchers explore in detail the experiences, motives, and opinions of others and learn to see the world from perspectives other than their own” (Rubin & Rubin, 2012, p. 3). In addition, interviews have always had a central significance in ethnographic research (Rastas, 2010). In this thesis, the semi-structured interviews allowed the participants to expand on topics they considered relevant. Although Rubin & Rubin (2012) argue that the interview is not about chatting, the interviews I conducted flowed more like a conversation between people that know each other and less like a conversation between people with very different backgrounds. Rastas (2010) stated that documented conversations included in ethnographic research could be considered interview material (p. 68). The interviews I conducted also followed the view of Kvale (1996) who claims that “the research interview is a specific form of conversation” (p. 19). In most of the interviews the possible power asymmetry that could exist between interviewee and interviewed was minimal. Sherman Heyl (2001) claims that the asymmetric relationship between researcher and researched is attenuated in ethnographic research. In the case of this thesis the power relationship was even reversed at times.

To illustrate this I could bring forward how one interviewee answered to one probe I utilized after she described the current situation of a certain topic. Probes are questions, comments or gestures aimed at encouraging the interviewee to continue talking about a matter: they help regulate the length of answer and degree of detail and signal the level of depth you are looking for (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). The probe I utilized was *miksi?* (Why?), to what the participant Pia laughed and answered, “Yes, good question” and laughed again. From this answer I

understood that she did not want to disclose more about the topic or that she did not have an answer. However, the way she responded to the questions shows how the interviewer-interviewee role was slightly reversed. At the end of the same interview, when it was obvious that the interview was coming to an end, Pia reversed the interviewer-interviewee roles.

Excerpt A

No, sano sinä, kun sä tulet muualta. Onko se Suomen luonto sulle niin ku... mitä sää koit kun sä tulit Suomeen eka kerran? Niin ku erilaisesta ympäristöstä?
(PIA)

Well, now you tell, when you come from somewhere else. Is that Finnish nature for you like...what did you experience when you came to Finland for the first time? Like from a different environment? (PIA)

After hesitating for a few seconds she utilized the imperative mood right before asking a question. Tang (2002) argues that when women interview women, the interviewer's assumed superior position becomes questionable. The author also recalls how a black researcher, Ann Phoenix, agrees with the statement that: "when a black woman interviews white respondents the traditional power relation in the interview is inverted" (Tang, 2002, p. 707). In the case of this study this reason is not attributed to the causes that contribute the role reversal. However, the power relations that cause the role inversion are not only due to race, but there are other factors such as social class, gender and age (Phoenix, 1994 in Tang, 2002). But even if these particular factors are not a cause, the interview is an interaction between unique individuals; therefore, the end result of the encounter is subject to multiple factors.

The example above was not the only instance in which the interviewee asked questions from the interviewer. This also happened when talking about topics specific to the local culture, for instance, that of *jokamiehen oikeuden* (the right of all men). When she mentioned this concept, Pia hesitated before asking with a low volume: "*Onks sulle tuttu?*" ("Is it familiar to you?"). I clarified that it was and she continued her explanation. This question from the interviewee provided instant feedback regarding her lack of information about my knowledge

of Finnish culture and language. In addition, it indicated that the interviewee was aware that I was not a Finnish native speaker, thus she considered the possibility I might not understand matters that she considered to be cultural. I could describe this feedback as both positive and constructive. First, it provided valuable insights for the analysis since, by marking certain terms, the interviewers were indirectly hinting key terms of a cultural discourse. In addition, this kind of questions served to improve the way I was introducing myself to the interviewers before the interview. I realized that I probably had not explained well to what extent I knew the concepts to be discussed. Certainly some terms discussed were unknown to me, however the one of *jokamiehenoikeuden* is not technical or scientific jargon but in Finland a very common one. The fact that some interviewees were asking these kinds of questions regarding my knowledge of certain terms also provided feedback about the way in which the participants perceived me. I felt some of them wanted to help in case I was unaware of the concepts they introduced. For this purpose they utilized discursive resources like asking in a low voice, and if I didn't know about the concept they would illustrate what they were talking about. I provide one example of how this was done by Paavo in the excerpt below.

Excerpt B

Joka vuosi käytiin hillassa. Tiedätkö sä mitä on hillassa käynti? [Ei.] Tiedätkö mikä on hilla? [En edes tiedä, en] Entä lakka? [Joo, kyllä...joo] No, se on sama marja...me käytiin lakkoja poimimassa [Siis, se on ihan sama?] Se on ihan sama. Sillä...marjalla on ainakin neljä suomalaista nimeä; on lakka, valokki, hilla ja muura, suomurain. (PAAVO)

Every year we went to gather *hilla*. Do you know what it is to gather *hilla*? [No.] Do you know what is *hilla*? [No, I don't even know] How about cloudberry? [Ok, yes...yeah] Well, it is the same berry...we went to pluck cloudberrries [So, it is exactly the same?] It is exactly the same. Because...the berry has at least four Finnish names; lakka, valokki, hilla and muura, suomurain. (PAAVO)

Paavo used a different or uncommon term to refer to cloudberry (which is more common in the north of Finland); therefore in the beginning I could not understand what he was talking about although I suspected it was a fruit of the forest. First he mentions that picking up *hilla* (one word for cloudberry) was something that he and his family would do every year. Suspecting that the term is not a common one for cloudberry, he asked if I knew what it is to pick up *hilla*, which is usually

known in south Finland and the Helsinki region as *lakka*. When he restarted his narration about the picking up the berry with his family I interrupted to make sure the berry was actually exactly the same kind of berry: I doubted if I understood correctly and guessed that it could probably mean a similar berry, but not the *lakka* that was familiar to me. What led me to interrupt him was the cognitive dissonance caused by me perceiving as peculiar to have four very different words for exactly the same berry (in addition to my eagerness to make sure that I understood very well what was being discussed). Sensing my interest in the name of the berry, Paavo deviated his narration to mention that cloudberry is named with four different words in Finland. This way he also illustrated the diversity of dialects utilized in different regions in Finland. It certainly raised an aspect to be considered in the following interviews: that places and regions in Finland might not be as homogenous as initially assumed.

The reason I choose interviews as a method of data collection is because they are, like Rubin and Rubin (2012) contend, one of the key naturalistic research methods “often guided by a *social construction approach* that focuses on how people perceive their worlds and how they interpret their experiences” (p. 3). Winchatz (2006) establishes that in many cases interviews are the only ways in which the ethnographer can obtain a corpus of linguistic data. However, it is not the case of this study since data could have also been obtained, for instance, by electronic mail, written questionnaire or even by conducting a survey. Regarding the use of a foreign language and the misunderstandings that it could create, utilizing interpreters is always a possibility. Nevertheless, the fact that I didn’t know all the words used by the participants actually proved valuable for data analysis purposes. I agree with Winchatz’ statement that “the ethnographer who can master the foreign language well enough to personally conduct the interviews may be at an advantage” (2006, p. 84). Instead of considering them disadvantages, Winchatz (2006) claimed that if communicative misunderstandings are dealt with openly, these could become methodological gems (p. 85). She highlighted two common problems for the foreign ethnographer; the first one is the inability to appropriately express a question due to linguistic problems. The second one is the

inability to understand the lexical choices of the participants. Winchatz (2006) lists three strategies utilized when the speech of the interviewees is difficult to understand; the first one is the face-saving strategy, the second is repairing by repeating the trouble source word, this is called the mirroring technique. The third is to point the trouble source in question; in this case the participant provides richer descriptions (p. 87).

Interviewing in a foreign language is challenging for several reasons. One is that the common status and power balance dynamics between the interviewer and interviewee are somehow displaced. For instance, while interviewing in Finnish I was in a position of “linguistic subordination” (Tang, 2002, p. 714). When utilizing a foreign language, the interviewer is in the role of the one to proof himself and not in the role of an expert. Nevertheless, Winchatz argues that some of the challenges and misunderstandings that come from utilizing a foreign language can become “methodological gems” (2006, p. 85).

Allowing linguistic inaccuracies and probing provided flexibility when defining follow-up topics to discuss in the interview. Certainly, openly accepting limitations regarding one's linguistic capabilities is “interpersonally loaded” (Winchatz, 2006). In the worst case it could arouse feelings of incompetence and frustration. In my case the interviewees were very tolerant and corrected me in a very polite and neutral way without showing signs of frustration. Nevertheless, being corrected by the participants in addition to my own insecurities about my language skills created increased the level of nervousness during the rest of the interview.

One recommendation is to always have a reliable recording device; this is absolutely necessary for keeping a mental peace during the entire interview. In addition, while the interview proceeds one can mark next to the question of concern if there is something that was not clear. This might be clarified later while listening to the recording. In the case of this thesis the interviewees were very open and seemed to be sincere about their responses. Some of them even started to share more information than was asked. In the next paragraphs I will describe how I organized and started analysing the information provided by the participants.

Data Analysis

Besides treated the data to respond to the research questions, one important aspect of the analysis is that of language. Although language is just one of the platforms to convey messages, when utilizing methods of discourse analysis “language is not the only object of inquiry, but rather, potentially all meaningful, situated symbolic activity” (Scollo, 2011, p. 3). In the case of this thesis the data was collected in Finnish language, a foreign language for me. In addition, the participants are from different regions of Finland and although they used their mother tongue, their dialects differed slightly, which caused a few confusions while transcribing the interviews. Another concern is related to the fact that some of the topics discussed in the interview are usually a source of contended meanings, for instance, regarding the terms nature and environment.

Initially, the data was analysed by listening to the digital record of each interview several times, translating them from Finnish to English language, and transcribing the text in English. Although usually considered a “behind-the-scenes task” (Oliver et al., 2005, p. 1273), the task of transcribing the interviews was not a minor one. It requires listening to the same interview several times while focusing both on language concerns (in this case being able to understand a foreign language) and on finding expressions, patterns and relevant information for the research. Oliver et al. (2005), argue that transcription practices reflect two modes that lie on a continuum: naturalism, in which utterances are transcribed in detail and denaturalism, that seeks to remove details such as stutters and pauses. According to the authors, the first mode aims to represent reality faithfully and the second acknowledges that reality is constructed by speech. The mode of transcription I followed in this thesis would lie between these two modes, but within the naturalism-denaturalism continuum it would approximate more to denaturalism.

The denaturalized transcription was suitable for methodological purposes. The criteria used to select the excerpts focused primarily on the content of the speech and less on the form. The way I transcribed the interviews was by listening in Finnish and translating and transcribing them, simultaneously, to English.

Although the transcription method was not following the naturalism approach, it was important to understand the foreign language and its variations (dialects, slang words, accent) to make sure that the correct meaning was given to the overall conversation. Therefore, I always listened for several times to make sure I had understood correctly what was being said. In many instances, I used a Finnish-English-Finnish or Finnish-Spanish-Finnish dictionary in order to understand not only the denotation, but also the connotation of some words. This exercise helped to identify words and topics with a cultural nuance and opened the door to in-depth analysis.

An initial period of reflection showed that the transcription process was more important and demanding than initially thought. Although a denaturalized transcription seeks to depict speech verbatim (Oliver et al., 2005), a longer period of reflection about the transcriptions showed that utilizing a denaturalized approach could make some participants feel that their speech was somehow manipulated: one of them claimed to be disturbed by the transcribed speech and the other claimed that the speech was not his/her own. Nevertheless, as the interviewer and person who transcribed the excerpts, I can assure that although some elements of speech like stutters, pauses, nonverbal and involuntary vocalizations were omitted, the transcriptions were accurate and reflect the “meanings and perceptions created and shared during a conversation” (ibid, 2005, p. 1276). Indeed, meaning and perceptions are important for a study grounded in ethnography of communication. However since I share Sherman Heyl’s (2001) claim that ethnographers “must also be concerned with the extent to which their research practice affects the rights and interests of participants” (p. 347), I discussed with one of the participant’s his/her concerns regarding his/her speech. Therefore, few sections of his/her text that could disclose personal identity, or were considered irrelevant for understanding the entire conversation were omitted from the final excerpts.

About the participants

All the participants are full time employees in UPM and work in functions related to the environment. This group of professionals constitute what according to Milburn (2004 in Poutiainen, 2007) is a speech community: a group of people

sharing a speech code (p. 19). The participants interviewed in this thesis can belong to more than one speech community simultaneously. Their job titles differ, but their activities can be considered somehow connected and they know each other well, and in many cases they work closely together. Their education and backgrounds also differ, some are biologists, some are forest experts and some come from the business or communication area. For privacy reasons the participants have been given an alias name. These aliases of the participants are Anu, Elina, Arja, Seppo, Paavo, Nina and Pia.

Nina's hobbies include many activities in nature, like sailing. Another regular activity involves strolling in the forest. Anu's hobbies in the forest includes spending time in the summer cottage, picking berries is an important activity, she also does useful "forest work" and she mentions doing some of these activities in the company of close family. Elina's activities in nature includes, besides picking berries, visiting her forest plot and doing "forest work". Arja's perception of nature is very comprehensive, she enjoys activities in the forest, for instance in the summer cottage. Seppo's contribution was rich in personal anecdotes from childhood. For Seppo, nature is essential; he goes to *metsään tai luontoon* (forest or nature) when he wants to *rauhoittua* and diminish stress. For him, the nature is an area that can be accessed and exited. In some cases it is necessary to get there, like it is for the human to breath and drink water. Paavo's hobbies in nature include activities common in Finland like berry and mushroom picking. He also practices hiking, which sometimes includes traveling to exotic natural settings abroad. Pia's contribution was rich in personal anecdotes and her hobbies in nature include, for instance, spending time in the summer cottage with family.

All the participants were contacted and invited to participate in the interview by email. In the email I explained about the topic of the thesis and if they had doubts I clarified them, for instance, I commented that the interview needed to be recorded digitally for future analysis. Later we agreed the day and time for the interview and finally, when the meeting was settled, I sent the interview guide to them. Regarding the anonymity of the data collected, this was stated before, but also after the interview. I commented that the idea is not to analyse an individual

speech, but the cultural aspects reflected by the speech community. After the data was translated and transcribed, the transcriptions of those excerpts to be published was sent to the participants. All of them allowed the publication of their text. Only in two cases they commented about their surprise with the way their speech sounded, however, in one case the person still agreed to publish it. On the other case the person agreed to publish the texts with few modifications.

In the next section I explain the main research method applied to analyse the data. I will also tell more about the language challenges of conducting an interview in a foreign language.

Ethical considerations

At the time of conducting the interviews for this thesis I was working in UPM. Nevertheless, the objectivity of the final results was not really affected since while writing this paper I was not working in the company. The 20 excerpts that were selected, transcribed and translated from the interviews were sent to each of the participants for review, and their permission to publish them was also requested.

In the research report “Ethics in Social Research: The views of research participants,” Graham et al. (2007) contend that ethical procedures before conducting interviews for research include unpressurised decision-making about taking part in the research. In addition, Graham et al. (2007) establish that when analysing interviews it is important to be careful in capturing the participants’ views and experiences. Both procedures were carefully considered in this thesis. I invited the participants by sending one email in which I explained the purpose of the interviews and the research. I waited for their answer to the initial email and did not send further reminders. Furthermore, I provided more information about the thesis if this was solicited before agreeing to participate.

Regarding capturing the participants views and experiences, I sent them (for review and approval) the translated and transcribed excerpts to be analysed and published. Naturally, I was open to discussing any possible question regarding the translation and transcription of their speech. Another ethical consideration surfaced when I was engaged in the interpretation of the participants’ speech. First it was necessary to be careful with the literal translation of their speech, which

needed to be faithful to the original speech (produced as spoken Finnish language). Then I needed to pay attention to the meaning of the participants' speech by considering several factors such as the fact that I am not a native Finnish speaker, and that I am from Latin America, a region that is sometimes considered problematic regarding sustainable development matters. I also needed to consider the participants' job position, their age, education, and even to some extent their socioeconomic background. To interpret speech right is the central task of this thesis and I am sure that the speech of the participants is interpreted with the least bias possible.

4.3 Data Analysis / CuDA (Cultural Discourse Analysis)

In this section I explain how I applied the ethnographic method of CuDA to the 20 excerpts analysed. I will also mention some of the topics that will be elaborated in the results section. The data analysis started already when listening several times to the recorded interviews while fine-tuning the transcripts. While listening, I looked for instances of comments related to nature, forest, activities, hobbies and relationships in nature, as well as environmental activism. I was allocating special attention to these topics because I noticed that speech about them included the richest and most intimate expressions, feelings and experiences. The excerpts were selected to exemplify salient discursive hubs and radiants as utilized by Carbaugh (2007, see also Carbaugh & Cerulli, 2012; Scollo, 2011). Other parts of the interviews were relevant to support the analysis; these comments are quoted or paraphrased, but not displayed as excerpts. The participants shared personal and business information. Although both were valuable to identify the main discourses about nature, the intimate feelings and experiences expressed the richest insights about the values about nature held by the participants. As the data analysis progressed I identified common topics and phrases across the transcripts, for instance, those related to being in nature (which provided insights about *personhood*) and doing something there (provided insights about *actions* and *relations* in nature).

Soon after I started the data analysis I found a common pattern in how the participants spoke about nature. For instance, I could identify common themes like peace, calming down, relaxation, enduring and spirituality. Since most of the participants spoke about similar subjects I proceeded to combine these in order to identify discourses. Eventually the salient or main discourses were easily identified and I started to focus exclusively on those.

Cultural Discourse Analysis (CuDA)

The method used to analyse the excerpts consisted of Carbaugh's CuDA (see Carbaugh, 2007a). Cultural Discourse Analysis allows the researcher to find richer meanings behind the content of communication by dissecting elements of speech to identify concrete cultural items that can be classified as values, beliefs, conventions and paradigms. Regarding CuDA and how I applied it here, I want to highlight that my intention was to focus on a topic-centred analysis that highlights the meanings produced when talking about nature and environment. I aim to study the communication of a group of professionals working in the environmental function of a forest company in Finland.

The CuDA method proposes a set of analytical tools to analyse speech in order to find cultural discourses. I have highlighted the primacy of language when analysing communication. Nevertheless, although the language is the obvious object of inquiry, the context is still of high relevance. One way to study the context and meta-context of a communication practice is to apply the CuDA method, which originates from the ethnography of communication tradition. Ethnography of communication has become essential to the study of culture and communication because it relates language to social organization, role-relationships, values and beliefs (Saville-Troike, 2003). A prominent theory within EC is the *Speech Codes Theory* developed by Gerry Philipsen in the late 1970s and early 1980s. The ethnographic studies of two culturally different communities in the United States, the Teamsterville and Nacirema speech studies in Chicago, could be considered seminal groundwork of what Philipsen would later label, after moving from description to explanation, *Speech Codes Theory*. This theory proposes a way to identify speech codes, their content and how they could affect

people living within a certain culture. Philipsen's theory has been widely acknowledged. Some theoretical elaborations like *Cultural Discourse Theory* (Carbaugh, 1988) have been structured partly over speech code theory, and have further illustrated and elaborated Philipsen's work (see Carbaugh, 1995).

Cultural discourse analysis (CuDA) presupposes that communication is imbued with particular cultural characteristics, negotiated by the actors involved in the action, and applied by individuals (Carbaugh & Cerulli, 2012, p. 8). This methodology is suitable for answering the research question of this thesis because it can be applied in a way that the variances of cultural expressions related to nature and the environment can be identified better. The approach has already been useful to uncover cultural forms of communication by identifying underlying beliefs and values about nature (see Carbaugh, 1999; Carbaugh & Cerulli, 2012). According to Milstein, "in examining cultural manifestations of human-nature relations in face-to-face communication, some researchers have used ethnographic approaches" (2009, p. 345). Nevertheless, research about human-nature relations varies across time and place (see Basso, 1970; Carbaugh, 1999; Scollo Sawyer, 2004). The topics are also diverse, for instance, some researchers have focused on communication that does not involve oral speech. Braithwaite (1990) advocated "communicative silence" (p. 321) as a valid focus of analysis in ethnography of communication. Native American use of communicative silence is a topic of interest in research about nature (see Basso, 1970; Carbaugh, 1999). Other researchers have focused on activities done in nature such as strolling as a form of ritual (see Sawyer, 2001) and "sauntering" (Scollo Sawyer, 2004).

The study of linguistic codes led to the development of the Cultural Discourse Theory (CDT) put forward by Carbaugh in the late 80s. This theoretical approach states that if language is based on terms that vary across cultures and people further construct these concepts as they communicate, the meaning of communication cuts across language, communication and culture. Initially, Carbaugh was mostly concerned with terms utilized to define communication in a specific culture (see Carbaugh, 1989). But later his research advanced to a comparative level leading to the development of Cultural Discourse Analysis,

abbreviated as CuDA (see Carbaugh, 2007a). This acronym needs to be distinguished from the CDA (Critical Discourse Analysis), an approach advanced by Jan Blommaert (2005) to study topics related to global political economy like inequality of discursive resources (Scollo, 2011). Carbaugh (2007a) contends that usually the study of cultural discourses is embedded in particular phenomena rich in communication situations. These phenomena or research areas are, for instance, intercultural synchrony (see Wilkins, 2007), structuring norms and indigenous frames (see Carbaugh, 1990a, 1990b), environmental discourse (see Morgan, 2003), and interpersonal relationships (see Fitch, 1998; Poutiainen, 2005).

In this thesis I focused on how the participants talk about nature, the environment and their work, and also on the interaction occurring between the interviewee and the interviewer. Aspects of the interaction between interviewer-interviewee that might influence the analysis will be mentioned to provide better grounds for interpretation. Carbaugh et al. (2011) argued that the ethnographer must engage in reflexivity in order to make interpretation as transparent as possible.

The ethnographer must confront, immediately, the possibility of multiple cultural and personal stances...we have mentioned one basic condition of what is being noticed, that is, as Geertz (1973) reminds us, that ethnographies involve our discourse about others' discourses, and as a result our interpretations of others' interpretations are inevitably incomplete, nonfinal reports on the matter." (p. 155)

The concept of reflexivity put forward by Carbaugh et al. (2011) consist of using discourse at one level to discuss discourse on another in order to understand multiple meanings. By utilizing CuDA I aimed at describing the discourse or the system of symbols, meanings and codes related to nature and the environment in order to find a cultural discourse: a group of "interrelated thematic codes" (Scollo, 2011, p. 8). This approach to study cultural discourses requires the identification of explicit hubs permeating a speech, and the careful interpretation of the implicit hubs within the speech. Carbaugh and Cerulli describe the discursive hubs (or analytical tools) of identity, action, feelings, relating, and dwelling (2012, p. 9) to be utilized as an analytical framework to explore specific communication practices

in order to find the underlying cultural discourses. In addition, cultural messages are not absolute but can be located along a dimension, for instance, there are premises that are explicit and those taken for granted or assumed by the participants (Carbaugh & Cerulli, 2012, p. 9). These five foci of analysis can be called discursive hubs or analytical tools depending on the stage of the research. For instance, they are analytical tools during the data analysis, but in the results section they can be presented as discursive hubs. The discursive hubs make up a thematic whole that runs throughout the data and the researcher can focus on one at a time. However, it is convenient to keep in mind the others in order to further identify a salient or explicit hub as well as those that are implicit but clearly present in the text.

The objectives of the theoretical approach put forward by Carbaugh and van Over (2013) are not only five modes of doing CuDA, but also stages of doing it. These investigative modes or stages of research are the theoretical, descriptive, interpretive, comparative, and critical. A researcher could choose between focusing exclusively on any one of these modes if that would suit the research questions better. But more than a systematic way to conduct CuDA, Carbaugh and van Over (2013) claim that the five modes fulfil specific purposes:

We emphasize the approach as a general theory with several distinct objectives; it is designed to discover local discursive practices, to describe and document these, to interpret their meanings to participants, as well as to comparatively and critically assess those for purposes of social betterment. (p. 144)

In this thesis I will include all the modes of inquiry and go from the theoretical to the critical analysis in the same order as that presented by Carbaugh and van Over (2013). This section was aimed to provide a theoretical framework that facilitates further analysis and interpretation. In addition to providing a reference for the assessment of work performed during data gathering, I also explained the main theoretical framework utilized to analyse the data selected. The challenges found during data gathering are mostly related to language, cultural premises unknown to the researcher, and a novel situation regarding power dynamics between interviewed and interviewee.

The next chapter is the results section and it is divided in three thematic sections that show the data that was analysed. First I will describe the data by exemplifying 20 excerpts and identifying relevant terms. The transcriptions of the excerpts are shown in vernacular Finnish and also in English. At the end of each section there is an interpretation of the cultural propositions arising from the speech of the participants.

5. Research results

In the previous section, the key tenet of CDT was elucidated: that any communication practice is embedded and understood in its own context. Besides summarizing the theoretical background of this study, I also identified the five analytic tools utilized for conducting CuDA: dwelling, relating, feeling, action and identity. After applying these five analytical tools to the data, I noticed that the results seem to be uniform throughout the data. For instance, the participants have similar ideas about nature. Indeed, the cultural propositions and premises advanced in most cases seem either to be interrelated or to reinforce each other throughout the data. In the preceding chapter I explained how I utilized the analytical tools to analyse the data. Since in most cases the notions overlap, the exercise required rethinking the current interpretation. Throughout this chapter I will mention these kinds of cases and justify my interpretation.

This chapter is dedicated to illustrate 20 excerpts of text extracted from the interviews conducted with seven environmental professionals of the forest company UPM. Each item belonging to this data corpus is numbered in ascending order. Whenever there is a need to refer to an excerpt the numbering will be utilised and the alias of the author of that text will also be mentioned. The chapter is divided in three sections that correspond to each of the discursive hubs identified. In addition to the main hubs, others not so salient but identifiable in the data corpus will be mentioned. At the end of each section I summarize the main cultural propositions that arise when *rentoutua ja rauhoittua*, *olla itsensä kanssa* and *jatkuvuus* are found to be explicit discourses in the communication of the individuals interviewed. In addition, I provide further interpretation of the cultural propositions originating from each of the discursive hubs.

5.1 *Rentoutua ja rauhoittua* (to relax and calm down)

When analysing the speech of the participants through the explicit discursive hub of dwelling, one noteworthy discourse is that of nature as an ideal place to *rentoutua* (to relax) and *rauhoittua* (to calm down). The excerpts analysed in this

subsection are six and they vary in length. In some cases they also differ in style since some of them include, shortly, my own intervention (proves and clarifications) during the conversation. Nevertheless, the excerpts do show some uniformity, for instance in form, but also in content as they all refer to the same discourse hub and provide valuable elements for the elaboration of cultural propositions and the identification of cultural premises.

Regarding this first hub, the participants expressed similar opinions about nature being an important element for relaxing and calming down. Although some did it explicitly, some expressed the same in a more subtle way. When asked about what nature means for them, what they do in nature, and how does it feel to be in nature, the interviewees brought forward notions of peace, privacy, silence, endurance, recovery, comfort, liberty, as well as physical, mental and spiritual rest. In addition, almost all the interviewees refer to nature as a *paikka* (place) in which one can do, reflect, feel, organize, purge, and finally recharge. In Excerpt 1, Anu states that for her nature is very important because it is a *paikka* to recharge batteries.

Excerpt 1

Mulle luonto on tosi tärkeä, tärkeässä roolissa, että on semmonen ehkä tärkeä merkitys silloin että se on semmoinen akkujen lataus paikka, että meillä on niin kun oma mökki, mikä on tosi luonnonrauhassa, ei ole naapureita lähimailla, ja tavallaan siellä on hyvin hiljaista ja ei kuule paljon. Se on mulle niin kun aina semmoinen että pääsee rentoutumaan ja tavallaan keskittymään kaikkeen muuhun kun niihin arkiasioihin. Se tosiaan auttaa tavallaan niin kun jaksamaan ja lataamaan akkuja niin sanotusti. (ANU)

For me nature is really important, in an important role, that maybe it has that kind of important meaning then because it is that kind of battery recharging place, we have our own summer cottage, that is really in the peace of nature, there are no neighbours in the surroundings, and in a way it is very quiet and you don't hear much. For me it is always that kind of place that you get to relax and in a way concentrate on everything else than everyday matters. In a way it truly helps to be able to cope and to charge batteries so to speak. (ANU)

For Anu, nature is an important *paikka* to recover from daily life. The importance of nature is justified by this being *akkujen lataus paikka* (a place for recharging batteries). From her response, two conditions for nature to be this kind of *paikka* are identified: quietness and privacy. This *paikka* needs to be quiet, which is

indicated when she mentions that their summer cottage is located *luonnonrauhassa* (in the peace of nature) and that one does not hear much. The second condition is with no *naapureita lähimailla* (neighbours in the surrounding).

Quietness and privacy surface not only as relevant qualities of nature, but also as requisites for nature to provide a specific setting for human endeavour. From the excerpt above, one understands that when these conditions of quietness and privacy are met then you are able to *rentoutua* and *keskittyä* (concentrate) on everything else but everyday matters. It could be claimed that nature is a setting for humans to recharge.

The condition of nature as a provider is not very clear in Excerpt 1. Nevertheless, the role of nature as a provider could be established when the capacity of nature to fulfil a human need by providing an ideal setting for relaxation is mentioned. Furthermore, the importance of nature is raised due to its capacity to fulfil a human need. Anu also introduced the notion of nature helping to *jaksamaan* (endure), a notion that is constant throughout most of the interviews either explicitly or implicitly. For instance, Anu considers that concentrating on everything else while in the nature helps *jaksamaan*.

In the excerpt below Elina mentions *paikka* and *jaksaa* (to endure) and introduces the terms *rauhallinen* (peaceful) and *hakea voimia* (get strength).

Excerpt 2

Miltä tuntuu olla luonnossa?

Rauhalliselta, ihan yhdellä sanalla rauhalliselta, ja mukavalta. Se on paikka jossa voi hakea voimia tavallaan sitten jaksakseen tavallisessa elämässä pyöryksessä. (ELINA)

How does it feel to be in the nature?

Peaceful, just in one word peaceful, and nice. It is a place where you can get strength in a way to be able to cope in the whirl of normal life. (ELINA)

Like in Anu's Excerpt 1, the condition of nature as a provider is present in Elina's comment. This offers elements to construct a discourse of nature not only as a partner but also as a source, a provider. According to her, nature helps *jaksamaan*: there one can *hakea voimia* to endure daily or ordinary life. It could be argued that to a certain extent both Anu and Elina consider nature a provider, a source of relief

and strength. Elina also connects nature to peace when she mentions that being in nature feels *rauhalliselta* (peaceful). Similar to *paikka* and *jaksaa, rauha* (peace) is a concept mentioned or connoted constantly throughout the excerpts. In Excerpt 1 Anu described the place where their summer cottage is located: *luonnonrauhassa* (peace of nature/peace of the countryside³). In the context of nature, peace seems to denote quietness, silence, harmony, and privacy.

In addition to peace, Elina also mentions *mukavalta* (feels nice) to describe how it feels to be in nature. Similarly, in the excerpt below Arja defines nature as a *paikka* for resting, one where the general feeling is that there *tuntuu hyvältä* (it feels good).

Excerpt 3

Mulle siis sanotaan, että luonto se on semmonen paikka missä yleensä niin ku sielu ja ruumis lepää, ja tota siellä on mahdollisuus niin ku suhteuttaa asioita, mutta kyllä mä siis tykkään luonnossa myös olla kun ruumis lepää, mutta se lepää myös semmosessa niin kun aktiivisessa työssä joko siis jossain mökillä metsätöissä tai sitten että siellä vaeltamassa, hiihtämässä, että että kyse on niin kun, se on... semmonen paikka missä niin kun se yleistuntuma on että siellä tuntuu hyvältä. (ARJA)

For me, let's say that nature is that kind of place where usually the spirit and body rest, and there is a possibility like to put things into perspective, but yes I like to be in nature because the body rests, but it rests also in that kind of active work, either in the cottage doing forest work or then there hiking, skiing, so that it boils down to like, it is... that kind of place where the general feeling is that there it feels good. (ARJA)

Arja mentioned that in nature there is a possibility to *suhteuttaa asioita* (put things into perspective). This notion of changing the focus of one's mind is also present in Excerpt 1. In that excerpt Anu mentioned the possibility for this change of mind, for instance when she commented that in nature you are able to *keskittymään* in things other than daily matters. It seems that for both Anu and Arja being in the nature allows a certain level and quality of freedom to think about matters in a different way. For them, while in nature, life has its own rules, values, colours, and sceneries. A *paikka* to calm down, rest, recharge and be creative.

In the excerpt below Seppo introduces the concept of stress reduction as one of the key effects of *oikeeta luontoa* (the right nature).

³ Suomi-englanti suursanakirja, SanomaPro, 2012

Excerpt 4

Henkilökohtaisesti tarvitsen luontoa. Mun on pakko päästä luontoon. Jos haluan rauhoittua menen luontoon. Jos haluan vähentää stressiä menen luontoon. Mulla on kaksi koiraa, kävelen niitten kanssa. Mene metsään tai luontoon. Ja se luonto on tavallaan sitä oikeeta luontoa ei kaupunkiluontoa. (SEPPÖ)

Personally I need nature. I have to get to the nature; if I want to calm down I go to the nature. If I want to diminish stress I go to the nature. I have two dogs: I walk with them. I go to the forest or nature. And that nature is in a way that right nature not the city nature. (SEPPÖ)

Seppo is the only interviewee to explicitly make a distinction between the *oikeeta luontoa* and *kaupunkiluontoa* (city nature). When the analytic tool of relation is applied to identify the relationship between humans and nature a strong radiant of relation can be found. Albeit sometimes muted, the relationship between nature and humans is implicit in the four excerpts. This relationship is one based on dependence, intimacy, convenience and comfort. In Excerpt 1 Anu's relationship with nature seems to be one of intimacy or closeness, she mentioned that it is *aina* (always) that *paikka* to charge batteries. Other relationships with nature, for instance, Elina's and Seppo's show traits of comfort, convenience or dependence. Whatever the nature or quality of the relationship, what is relevant is identifying their existence.

In Excerpt 2 Elina mentions that being in nature feels nice. Similarly, in one part of the interview Paavo mentioned that he has always enjoyed it "there". He stressed the *rentouttava* and *rauhoittavaa* (calming and relaxing) effect of nature: "*Luonnossa liikkuminen onhan niin rentouttava, se on hyvin rauhoittavaa ja minä olen itse nauttinut siinä aina...*" (To move in nature is after all so relaxing, it is very calming and I have enjoyed there always...). In the interview, Paavo also highlighted the benefits of being in the nature, for instance, he explained how stress reduction can be achieved and even recalled the existence of scientific studies on the subject: "*Pienikin päivittäinen tapahtuma, kulkeminen jonkun viheralueen läpi näkyy stressitason laskemisena*" (Also a small daily event, walking through some park, shows in the reduction of the stress level).

It is interesting to note that both Paavo and Seppo mention the stress reduction effect of nature as a concrete benefit. It seems that these interviewees use

a slightly different vocabulary and phrases to express their ideas about nature. In Excerpt 4 Seppo argued that for him it is necessary to access nature to benefit from the stress reduction effect. The other participants also mention the benefits of nature, for instance, in Excerpt 1 Anu mentions the battery recharging effect, in Excerpt 2 Elina mentions getting strength in nature and in Excerpt 3 Arja mentions the resting effect of nature on the body and spirit. Nevertheless, the way in which Anu, Elina and Arja express the effects of nature differs slightly to how Paavo and Seppo express a similar kind of effect. Although the idea they want to convey is probably the same, the way in which it is expressed is qualitatively distinctive. Paavo refers to *viheralue* (green space or green belt), a concept denoting an urban setting and utilized in city planning (in other parts of the interview he brings forward how nature is all around, even in the cities). When Seppo mentions he goes to the forest *tai luontoon* (or to the nature) he mentions he goes to the *oikeeta luontoa* (right nature) not the *kaupunkiluontoa* (city nature). Paavo and Seppo highlight the concrete and readily available stress reduction benefit of nature, whereas Anu, Elina and Arja focus mostly on nature as *paikka* that offers comfort, strength and refuge from ordinary life.

The use of the term *paikka* is noticeable throughout the interviews. Sometimes it refers to nature as a whole or a specific and special *paikka* in nature. Some of those interviewed are more specific and descriptive of nature as a *paikka*, like Arja when she describes the sea and forests as *päätyhjennys paikkoja* (head-emptying places) in one part of the interview. Furthermore, she recollects a similar feeling when describing her trip to a traditional *paikka*: Saariselkä in the Finnish Lapland.

Excerpt 5

Se on semmonen vapauttava tunne just, vaikka tänä keväänä olin niin kun Saariselällä, jossa se on just semmoista hyvin perinteistä Lapin tunturimaisema niin kun kyllä se on jotenkin semmonen, semmonen niin ku, päätä puhdistava tunne kun sä oot tunturille kiivennyt ja katot sitä, sitä maisemaa... (ARJA)

It is this kind of liberating feeling, for example this Spring I was in Saariselkä, where there is this kind of very traditional Lapland's arctic hill landscape, so indeed it is somehow that kind of mind-clearing feeling when you have climbed the hill and then watch that scenery ... (ARJA)

In the excerpt above Arja introduced a similar term to *päätyhjennys paikkoja* (which refers to how the sea and forest help empty the mind). In Excerpt 5 she utilizes a different term, that of *päätä puhdistava* (mind-clearing). The second term refers to a deeper cognitive level, one in which the head is overcome by the immensity in front and thus cleared.

In addition, the *vapauttava* (liberating) feeling is mentioned twice in the excerpt above. The state of feeling free or liberated does not correspond to a physical liberation, but to a mental one, and it could originate from an empty and clear mind. Arja utilizes the word *tunne* (feeling) two times and not other word such as knowing or realizing. Without routines, worries, banalities, and other people, Arja does not understand but actually feels freedom. As it was already mentioned, some of the interviewees refer to nature as a *paikka* where you can *rauhottua* and be *omien ajatusten kanssa* (with your own thoughts). Other terms similar to be *omien ajatusten kanssa* are, for instance, the one utilized by Anu in Excerpt 1 *keskittymään kaikkeen muuhun kun niihin arkiasioihin* and the terms used by Arja in the interview; *päätyhjennys*, and in Excerpt 5; *päätä puhdistava*.

The term and concept of *paikka* is not only referred to in an abstract general sense but also as a concrete, special location. It is interesting to note some discursive devices utilized by Paavo, for instance, he uses *me oltiin* (we were) followed by *käytiin* (we visited) when during the interview he mentions his trip to Nepal's Annapurna. This clarification seems to have the purpose of highlighting the fact that it is a special *paikka*, one where you can be, but given its special character and the fact that the trekking group is not from Nepal then it is a *paikka* that is visited. Regarding the feelings that kind of *paikka* aroused in him, Paavo first hesitated and couldn't point out the feelings. Then he continued and shared that the *paikka* invoked wonder and beauty: "*ihastelusta, kauneutta*" (amazement, beauty). During the interview Paavo spoke of how the magnificence of the Annapurna mountain range in Nepal made him understand his position in life "*ja...ja tietysti ymmärtää oma pienuutensa...*" ("and...of course one understands its own insignificance..."). For some of the interviewees nature is a *paikka* that allows them to understand *oma pienuutensa* (own insignificance). In the following

section in Excerpt 7 Nina also speaks about understanding one's own significance while contemplating the mighty display of nature's greatness.

In the excerpt below Elina is concerned about the suitability of a water power plant as a location for office work.

Excerpt 6

Pääsääntöisesti mie olen Kuusankoskella, siellä on vesivoimalaitos, meillä on vesivoimalaitoksella toimisto ja...se on aika äänekäs toimistopaikka. Vesivoima turbiini käy koko ajan eli se on sellanen humina elikkä, ensimmäisen kerran kun sinne tulee ihminen miettii 'ensimmäisen kertaa semmonen kysymys Harrilta, että: Oletko tosissasi että tullaan tänne tekemään työtä?' Mutta kaikkeen tottuu, siellä on sellainen perus humina, siellä on...ja ei se enää häiritsee, huoneessa on sitten hiljaisempi...Kauniit näköalat miun joelle, niin talvella kun kesälläkin...[...] joskus niin kun meillä on kiire aika usein ja sitten pitää tehdä ja sit ei tarvi kuin kääntää se tuoli nyt sinne ikkunoihin ja jokimaisemaan ja hetken aika katella sitä niin...saa ajatuksen rauhoittuu ja selkeytyy ja voi taas jatkaa...(ELINA)

Regularly I am in Kuusankoski, there is a water power plant, we have an office in the water power plant and... it is a quite a noisy office place. A water power turbine works all the time, so there is this kind of hum, so, when someone comes there for the first time the person thinks 'the first time and this kind of question for Harri: Are you serious we come here to work?' but one adapts to everything, there is this kind of hum, there is...and it does not bother anymore, in the room then it is more quiet. Beautiful views to my river, in winter and in summer also...[...] sometimes, because we are in a hurry quite often and you have to do things, then you only need to turn the chair towards the windows and river view and for a moment look at it...it calms and clears the thoughts and then one can again continue...(ELINA)

Elina recognizes that a water power plant with its background hum is not a regular idea of an office location. Nevertheless, she is able to balance the inconvenience of hearing a hum in the background with the fact that, from her more quiet office, she can see the beautiful river scenery in summer and winter. As Elina already commented in Excerpt 2, the nature is a *paikka* that provides shelter and strength against unpleasant situations. The *paikka* can be nature in an abstract way, or in a concrete and special one. During the interview she mentioned that the *kasveja, metsiä, järviä* (plants, forests, lakes) are elements of nature that could be considered a specific *paikka*.

Recuperating from distress and being able to *jaksamaan* and *taas jatkaa* summarize the process that the participants have illustrated in their responses above. The six excerpts analysed above provide enough and interesting notions that

allow me to introduce the cultural propositions listed below.

- Nature is a *paikka* that offers *rauha* to *rauhoittua* and *rentouttua*. This dual effect allows one to recharge and *jaksamaan*.
- In nature, not only the body but also the soul rests.
- For humans, nature is a partner but also a source, a provider that offers shelter from everyday matters.
- The nature aids in the process of *pään tyhjennys* (head-emptying) and *puhdistus* (purification of the mind).
- *Luonnonrauhassa* (silence, quietness and no neighbours in the immediacy) allows one to relax and calm down.
- The term *paikka* is adapted to different contexts: the abstract and concrete.
- Calmness opens the possibility to have a relationship with oneself.

Nature is mostly seen as a *paikka* that offers peace, rest, energy, endurance, and a shelter from trivial matters. One interesting premise is that of nature as a source of a liberating feeling. Although one of the key implicit discursive hubs identified throughout the data is that of feeling, that of action was also noticeable and provided relevant information about the beliefs and values of the interviewees. For instance, most of the interviewees recall something that they do while in nature be it either a physical, mental or spiritual action. The peace of nature is seen as necessary for calming down, recovering, being with own thoughts and enduring.

5.2 Olla itsensä kanssa (being with oneself)

Nature activates the relationship with oneself. Nature as a *paikka* is also a context in which one can think about broader things, be spiritual and build his/her own identity. When analysing the speech of the participants through the analytic tool of identity, one explicit discursive hub is that of *olla itsensä kanssa* (being with oneself). One interesting cultural premise from the previous section is that, when in nature, one is able to *keskittymään* (concentrate) in other things than everyday matters. Nature facilitates being *omien ajatusten kanssa* (with one's own thoughts), therefore, the relationship with oneself is able to surface. The relationship with oneself is linked to the relationship with nature: the deeper the relationship with nature, then the deeper the relationship with oneself.

In this section I will display and analyse six excerpts that show how the interviewees regard nature as a platform for constructing, maintaining and developing identity. However, the identity I will be talking about in this section is not only identity on a personal level, but also on a national level. One way of understanding identity is from the point of view of personhood, i.e. being an individual. A second way of understanding identity or a deeper meaning of identity is identified at the end of the excerpt below when Nina refers to the person or human being as just a small part of “*tätä kaikkea*” (all this). Another way of thinking about identity is in this case Finnishness since elements referring to this identity are also explicit in the data. In Excerpt 7, Nina’s response follows a continuum that goes from the physical effects of nature on the body and mind, to the role of the human in nature.

Excerpt 7

Mitkä tunteita luontoa herättää?

... siellä saa olla, jotenkin kun on luonnossa niin sitä on jotenkin, jos yksin on luonnossa, niin sitä on jotenkin puhtaasti itsensä kanssa ja siinä ehkä rupee miettimään laajempia asioita niin kun tavallaan että kun on luonnossa niin kun ihminen, tai mä ainakin ymmärrän silloin, että ihminen on vain pieni osaa tätä kaikkea... (NINA)

What feelings does nature raises?

... there one can be, somehow when you are in the nature it is like, if by yourself in the nature, it is like you are purely by yourself and there maybe one starts to reflect about broader things, like in a way, when in the nature the person, or at least I understand then, that the human is just a small part of all this... (NINA)

In the excerpt above the discursive hub of identity is explicit, for instance, Nina shares how in nature one *saa olla* (is allowed to be). References to personhood include discursive devices like *muun mielestä* (in my opinion) and to a lesser extent *mää ainakin ymmärrän silloin* (at least I understand it so). One purpose of utilizing these devices is to highlight the individual nature of the opinions so they are not taken as generalizations. However, the devices are also used by Nina as a way to allow herself to elaborate more transcendental ideas about the topic. For instance, the first device *muun mielestä* is a preamble to the notion of thinking *laajempia asioita* (broader things) when by itself in nature. The second one *mää ainakin*

ymmärrän silloin introduces the belief that the person is just a *pieni osaa tätä kaikkea* (a small part of all this).

The discursive devices mentioned above highlight the importance of personhood for the interviewee. They help to understand and identify cultural propositions of identity and personhood. There is a dual dimension of the notion of the individual; from the point of view of the person itself, and that of others. First, Nina constructs her own self by differentiating it from the opinions and understandings of others. By mentioning that her opinions and understandings are of her own she is warning the listener about differing from mainstream beliefs in her elaborations, i.e. believing that the human is not above nature but a small part of it. Nina is asserting herself and at the same time recognizing the personhood of others. By highlighting that these are her opinions, she allows others the space to provide their own opinions and understandings about the topic discussed.

After mentioning that nature has a relaxing and calming effect, Nina mentions *siellä saa olla* (there one can be) followed by other phrases like *miettimään* (to reflect) and *ymmärtäminen* (understanding) that point to some of the actions involved in being in nature. However, Nina first mentions the active influence of nature on people: how this has a calming and relaxing effect. Nature is first and it prepares the way. Then Nina proceeds to draw our attention to deeper notions of identity by mentioning that *siellä* (there), in the nature, one *saa olla* (one can be): a place to embrace identity and express it. Nature is and it allows people to be.

One crucial element in Excerpt 7 is the condition Nina introduces: *jos yksin on luonnossa* (if by yourself in the nature) then it is like being *puhtaasti itsensä kanssa* (purely with yourself). After this condition of being by oneself is met the relation with oneself takes precedence. Then one can start thinking about *laajempia asioita*, and finally come back to the understanding of being a *pieni osaa tätä kaikkea*. The existence of the condition *jos yksin on luonnossa* for experiencing deep feelings and spiritual insights could point to cultural values and conventions about individuality and privacy. In addition, it shows how the relationship with oneself and the practice of spirituality is to be conducted. At the end of Excerpt 7 it

is clear that nature can also be understood on a deeper, perhaps more philosophical or spiritual way when Nina mentions that a person is just a *pieni osaa tätä kaikkea*. Another participant, Paavo, also expressed in the interview that in front of nature one understands *oma pienuutensa* (its own insignificance).

Nina's reflections seemed to deepen as her response progressed: her ideas go from the physical and mental to the spiritual. Similarly to Nina, in the Excerpt 3 of the previous section Arja introduced a spiritual concept: *sielu* (soul). In that excerpt, identity is present as an implicit radiant and not as an explicit hub. Arja talks about *suhteuttaa asioita* (put things into perspective), which presupposes that one is already actively relating to itself. In that excerpt Arja identified nature as a context for spiritual and physical rest and then pointed out notions similar to the ones introduced by Nina in Excerpt 7, for instance, that *siellä* (there) there is a possibility to *suhteuttaa asioita*. In this excerpt *olla itsensä kanssa* is implicit and it manifests itself through the action of *suhteuttaa asioita*, which requires self-reflection. *Suhteuttaa asioita* could also point to a value system, an order for things. Such order could aid in the right elaboration of identity, for instance, by understanding that the human is just a *pieni osaa tätä kaikkea*.

It could be claimed that in the case of this thesis personal identity is also somehow linked to national identity. There are significant cultural premises that have their origin in the national culture of the participants. For instance, in the Excerpts 8-10 some of those terms are *Suomi* (Finland), *Suomessa* (in Finland), *suomalaiset* (Finns) and *suomalaiskulttuuri* (Finnish culture). Other phrases like *me tehään* (we do) and *me ollaan* (we are/we have) are identifiable in Excerpt 10. *Suomalaisessa luonnossa* (in the Finnish nature), *suomalaisten ihmisluonne* (character of the Finns) and *me ollaan niin ku* (we are like) were phrases mentioned by Pia in the interview. In addition, there is a very strong relation radiant that stresses the relationship to oneself, those close to oneself and those like oneself.

Olla itsensä kanssa is being in its own *paikka* (place). The terms related to Finland used by the participants indicate that a significant portion of identity could originate from *place*. Being with oneself can be understood from three perspectives

(personal, relational and national identity). It can also be viewed from the points of view of identity and relationships. Figure 1 shows how identity is constructed on the base of *place*.

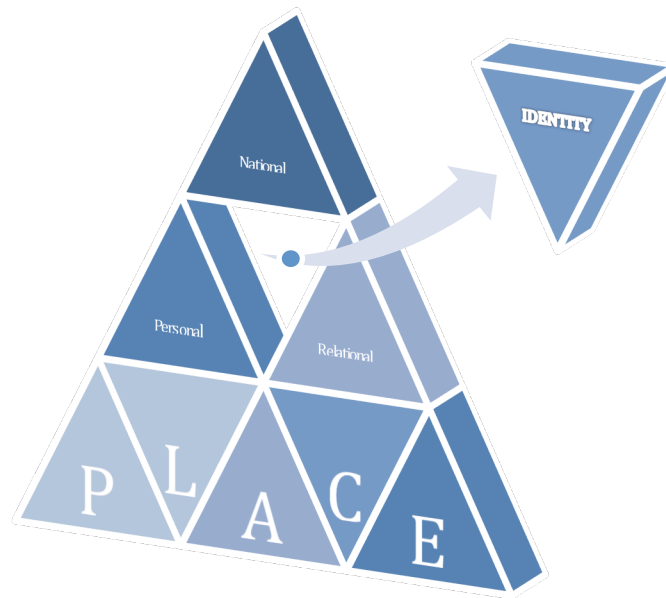


Figure 1. *Place* can influence the personal, relational and national identity.

First, *olla itsensä kanssa* is being with what one is: its identity. The national identity is a familiar *paikka*, one that is known to contribute to one's own feeling of calmness and rest. In the excerpt below Pia describes how Finns are, and how they state their opinions.

Excerpt 8

Onko sinun mielestäsi Suomessa vahvat mielipiteet? Niin kuin rajut mielipiteet?

[...] ei täällä ei semmoisia niin ku vahva... ja varma sekin kun metsä on monille niin lähellä vielä niin, se niin ku ymmärretään ja...tämä on mun mielestäni aika pragmaattinen lähestymistapa että, että ei semmosia...[...]...Suomi ei niin ku sillä tavalla kärsi sitä että...se on tä suomalaisten ihmisluonne että, vähän että... (PIA)

Do you think there are strong opinions in Finland? Like extreme opinions?

[...] not here, not that kind of like strong... and for sure also when the forest is for many like so close, that also, it is understood and...this is in my opinion a very pragmatic approach that...that not those kind of...[...]...Finland does not

like suffer in that way...it is this character of the Finns that, a little bit like...(PIA)

Pia starts her response by mentioning that the *metsä* (forest) is so familiar to people that it is understood. This statement provides a very rich cultural premise about identity, and how things known or unknown are approached. Pia considers this characteristic of the character of the Finns as a pragmatic approach. At the end of the excerpt she summarizes and concludes again by reminding that *se on tä suomalaisten ihmislunne* (it is this character of the Finns) and does not conclude the phrase expecting the listener to interpret the way Finns are by arriving to her own conclusion.

Another participant responded similarly to Pia. In the excerpt below, when responding to the question of with whom it is most difficult to talk to about environmental matters, Nina also refers to the identity of Finns. As Pia did, she engages in a comparative elaboration by evaluating a culture that seems to contrast with the Finnish one.

Excerpt 9

...tavallaan että se pitäisi vaan niin ku neuvotella se asia jotenkin ja...ja...mutta sekin oli ulkomailla se ryhmä missä mä olin, Ranskassa, niin sitten on myös että se oli niin ku ranskalaista kulttuuria, myös se että hän oli hirveä semmonen...ja vähän niin ku aggressiivinen ja sellanen niin ku...että Suomessa olisi erilainen tilanne niin ku ollaan niin ku...(NINA)

...in a way you just must negotiate the thing somehow and...and...but that group was also abroad that group where I was, in France, so then it is also that it was like French culture that they were very passionate and aggressive and like...maybe in Finland it would have been different situation when we are like...(NINA)

Nina also leaves the sentence about Finnish character open. Leaving the sentence open could mean; that she does not want to give a definite judgement (neither positive or negative); that she assumes that the listener knows well how Finns are, or she offers the listener the possibility to make its own interpretation. As mentioned in the beginning of this section, being with itself is related to identity. When one is in nature there is a feeling of being able to be oneself. Being itself entails a set of cultural capital that includes beliefs and values about nature and conventions, traditions, preferences, and pragmatic ways of existing in the world.

The three excerpts analysed above are a good example of how identity is built on an individual, social and national level that further construct each other.

In the excerpt below, when asked what is the biggest challenge in the environmental operations of the company, Elina referred to the national culture as a cause for not speaking too much about achievements in the area of environment.

Excerpt 10

Me tehään hirveästi asioita, me tehään oikeita asioita ja me ollaan saavutettu tosi paljon mikä on tosi hienoa, mutta ehkä me ollaan jossain suhteen vieläkin liian nöyriä, eli meidän pitäisi enemmän tuoda esille sitä, että mitä me ollaan tehty ja miten me huolehditaan oikeasti ympäristöstä...[...][Mistä se johtuu että me ollaan nöyriä?] Suomalaiskulttuuri...niin tehdään asioita, oikein asioita, oikeeseen suuntaan, mutta sitten ei pidetä melua siitä...(ELINA)

We do a huge amount of things, we do the right things and we have achieved a lot which is really great, but maybe we are in some aspects still too humble, I mean we should bring forward more what we have done and how we really take care of the environment...[...][What is the reason that we are humble?] Finnish culture...I mean we do things, the right things, in the right direction, but then we don't make noise about it...(ELINA)

By describing how they work in the environmental function of UPM, Elina also defines the Finnish national culture as hardworking, ethical and accomplished, and expresses her satisfaction about it. Nevertheless, she argues that communication about the environment could be improved. According to her, it is part of the culture to do things, the right things, in the right direction, but then not to talk about them.

When asked what she usually does in nature, Arja utilizes a different kind of reference for notions of national identity, that of *perinteistä* (traditional).

Excerpt 11

No, kyllä siis...ne on, ne on tota, just tätä hyvin perinteistä, hiihdän, mökkeilen, retkeilen, marjastan, ja tota...ennen mä ratsastin aika paljon ja, ja sitten, mutta nyt se on, se on jäänyt, nyt se on tosiaan sitten, että tammoista liikuntaa. Ja sitten mökki metsätyöpaikka se on mulle oikeastaan se mitä mä teen luonnossa...[Kuinka vanha olit kuin aloitit arvostaa luontoa?]...[...][...vanhempani olivat semmosia, jotka niin ku sitten hiihtivät ja retkeilivät ja marjastivat ja sillä tavalla, että, että sitä kautta minusta tuntuu että mä on niin ku aika kasvanutkin, siis mä oon ihan kaupunkilainen...(ARJA)]

Well, yes I mean, they are all these very traditional: I sky, go to the cottage, hike, pick berries and...before I used to ride horse a lot and, and then...but now it is, it has been left, now instead then is this kind of exercise. And then forest work at the cottage is really what I do in nature...[How old were you when you

start to value nature?] my parents were those that...liked skied and hiked and picked up berries, and in that way I have grown up with that. I mean I am really a city person...(ARJA)

Not only nature but also a familiar environment is a precondition for being with oneself. Since the national character and culture have an influence on identity, being with yourself is probably facilitated in your own *paikka*. In excerpt 11 Arja states that while in nature she engages in traditional activities like going to the summer cottage and doing forest work there. The discursive radiant of relation is shown in the excerpt above, for instance, when she mentions that she learned to value nature through her parents. In addition, the discursive hub of identity is clearly explicit when she states that she is a *kaupunkilainen* (city-person) and not *maalta* (from the countryside). When Paavo was asked what he does in nature he responded similarly to Arja, and mentioned the activities he carries out in the Finnish nature (see Excerpt 12).

According to Arja and Paavo, traditional activities done in the Finnish nature include picking berries and mushrooms, strolling, hiking, skiing, and going to the cottage. Although the discursive hub of identity is the one of concern in this section, excerpts 11 and 12 can be analysed also through the discursive hub of action. In addition, the discursive radiants of relation and dwelling are also implicitly present in the text. That of identity is in Arja's excerpt very explicit when she asserts her personal identity as a city-person. In Paavo's case it is more implicit, but it can be identified when he mentions the things that *suomalaisessa luonnossa teen* (I do in the Finnish nature). The activities carried out in the Finnish nature can influence the identity of those performing them, for instance, by allowing people to further build up their identity through participating in those activities. If nature and the activities one performs in it influence identity then Paavo's identity might be built up by the *paikka* he spends more time in, the one he likes the most or the one where he can be himself and with himself.

Excerpt 12

Minä olin vähän kaupunkilainen lapsi. Elikkä mä oon Oulu, Oulussa syntynyt ja ihan keskustassa asunut, ihan asfaltti lapsi, niin tota, meillä oli kesämökki, vanhemmilla, ja sinne muutettiin aina koko kesäksi, se oli sen verran lähellä, että mun isä kävi sieltä töissä sitten, ennen kun hänen loma alkoi ja, ja tota,

siellä tuli sitten vietettyä paljon aikaa. Yks semmonen mitä mä paljon tein niin, kun se oli semmosen suht iso joen varressa, se oli varma sataa metriä leveä se joki, meidän kohdalla, ja sitten koski, se oli kaks kolme kilometriä pitkä koski, että siinä ei ollut niin kuin tyveä kohtaa, että se laski koko ajan. Niin tota, mä siellä paljon kuljin ja vietin aikaa siinä joella ja sitten tietyissä vaiheessa mä kalastin, heitin uistinta ja sain haukia ja harjuksia ja, näitä näin...Sitten mä tulín kotiin. Mulla vanhemmat saattoivat molemmat olla töissä, aamulla mä lähin veljen kansa kalastamaan ja tultiin puolelta päivin takaisin, meillä oli sen verran kalaa, että savustettiin ne ja syötiin lounas siitä, (naurua) ei tarvinnut miettiä sen kummemmin mitä syödä...(PAAVO)

I was a little bit a city kid. I mean I was born in Oulu, and lived right in the centre, very asphalt kid, and we had a summer cottage, my parents, and we would move there for the whole summer, it was more or less close, that my dad would go from there to work before his holidays started, and, a lot of time was spent there. One thing that I did a lot was, when it was on the shore of a relatively big river, it was for sure like 100m wide that river, on our side, and then a rapid, it was some 2 or 3 km long rapid, that there was no like calm point, it would descent all the time. So I strolled there a lot and spent time on that river and then of course at some point I fished, threw lures and got pikes and graylings...like this. Then I came home. My parents happened to be both at work, in the morning and I would go to fish with my brother and come back at noon, we had that amount of fish that we smoked them and ate as lunch...(laughter) it was not necessary to think too much about what to eat...(PAAVO)

In the excerpt above Paavo describes his identity richly. The intense radiants of relation and dwelling are clearly noticeable. Similar to Arja in excerpt 11, Paavo mentions the *paikka* of his birth as an element of his identity: he calls himself a *kaupunkilainen lapsi* (city child). Nevertheless, it is interesting to note that he introduces the word *vähän* (a little) probably to highlight the fact that being born and raised in the city was not his entire story: he also spent considerable time in the nature. Just as Finnishness can be enacted by the use of *kännykkää* (mobile phone) (see Poutiainen, 2007), Finnishness is also done in nature by strolling, fishing, and spending time with close ones.

The implicit discursive hub of relation is noticeable in this excerpt when Paavo mentions his brother and his parents. The last part of his narration is of a rather relational nature and any reader would understand the tight bonds that the participant must have developed with his nuclear family as a result of spending time together in nature.

The set of cultural propositions originating from the six excerpts analysed in this section are listed below.

- The peace of nature is important for autonomy and individuality.
- Privacy and individuality are linked to notions of freedom and being with own thoughts.
- Neighbours close to one's *paikka* could threaten this freedom.
- Nature allows one to *olla itsensä kanssa*.
- Being by yourself in nature you start to *miettimään*.
- To *miettimään* and to *suhteuttaa asioita* is a form of rest.
- Identity is being with oneself.
- Identity is influenced by personal, relational and national dynamics: if one dimension changes, the relationship with oneself can also undergo adjustment.

These cultural propositions arose when the discursive hubs of identity and relating were utilized to analyse the speech of the participants. The cultural propositions formulated above include notions of personal identity but also of national identity. Peace is seen as a requirement for autonomy and individuality. One interesting cultural premise is related to personhood; that nature is an ideal context for the expression of one's individual characteristics. Notions related to identity are identifiable when individuals use words that describe or explain who they are. Some of those identifiable in this section refer to the individual, but some have a national connotation. Those that refer to the individual are, for instance, those spoken by Arja in Excerpt 11: *vanhempani olivat semmosia* (my parents were those that) and *mä oon ihan kaupunkilainen* (I am really a city-dweller). Those related to the national identity include terms deriving, for instance, from *Suomi* (Finland).

Olla itsensä kanssa is a value that runs deep in the participants. It is an activity that builds their identity and further reinforces it. Nevertheless, it is not simple to *olla itsensä kanssa*; there is a process to reach it, and conditions that facilitate reaching it. This process starts with *rentoutua ja rauhoittua*, which, as mentioned in the previous section, includes preliminary actions like rest in order to *jaksamaan*. Other conditions to achieve this first step in the process are peace, quietness and privacy. After this is achieved, the process of *olla itsensä kanssa* starts and one can start to *miettimään laajempia asioita*. These broader things can refer to the realization that the human is just a small part of *tätä kaikkea*. This realization might influence the way a person defines or redefines itself.

Another way to *olla itsensä kanssa* is by identifying with key contexts that have influenced the development of identity. This specific context can be, for instance, the *paikka* dwelled, the culture of the *paikka* dwelled, or the culture of a specific social group. Nature does have a strong influence on the identity of those who usually dwell in that *paikka*. Nature's influence is visible when people consider themselves to be, for instance, a small part of nature. *Olla itsensä kanssa* is being with oneself and with one's *paikka*.

5.3 *Jatkuvuus* (continuity)

The two previous sections *rentoutua ja rauhoittua* and *olla itsensä kanssa* showed how nature influences the body, mind and identity of a person. In this section, I will show eight excerpts that were identified and selected after the data was analysed through the analytical tool of relation. Since they were noticeable in the data, other radiants like dwelling and action were also contemplated while selecting the excerpts.

The cultural discourse of *jatkuvuus* (continuity) is one strongly related to nature and humans. This discourse includes cultural notions related to human traditions like teaching the children the same about nature. However, in some cases it also points to sustainability, and that part of nature that is continuously renewing itself: the forest. *Jatkuvuus* is related to humans when interpersonal relations are explicit. Most of the excerpts show references to human relationships or to nature itself. The former are explicit and easy to identify, the latter are pointed out in the analysis of the respective excerpt. Below, Nina comments how she spends time in the nature and expresses her wish to teach her children the same.

Excerpt 13

Lähinnä ehkä perheen kanssa, mutta mää tykkään kyllä olla yksin, sille sekin jos mää menen lenkille mää menen mielelläni yksin, koska sitten saat vähän niin kun...voit katsoo ympärilleen ja saa vähän niin kun sitä oman hengähdystaukoa ja... tota... saa miettiä oma asioita ja...tai jos menee metsään kävelemään tai jotain, mun mielestä on ihana mennä yksin, mutta sitten tietenkin lasten kanssa, opettaa heille tätä samaa...(NINA)

Mostly with the family, but I also like to be by myself, if I go to run I prefer to go alone because then you get a bit like you can look around and get your own

breather and think about your own things. Or if you go to the forest to walk...I think it is great to go alone, but then of course with the kids, to teach them the same... (NINA)

Note that the forest is a common connotation of nature in the life of this participant. This is also noticeable in the speech of the other participants. In the first sentence of the excerpt above, Nina does not mention the place where she runs. From the context (Finland, Finnish exercise customs) it can be deduced that she most likely runs on the walking trails nearby. Nevertheless, in the last sentence she talks about going to the forest to walk, preferably with the kids. Note that Nina mentions the forest only when she expresses a relation, in this case *lasten kanssa* (with the kids). In addition, the action that she does *lasten kanssa* is a slow one: walking. For Nina, the purpose of going *lenkille* (to run), preferably alone, is besides exercising also to take a break.

The discourse of continuation can be further identified in the participant's speech when she repeatedly comments how nice it is to be alone, but then adds how important it is to be with the kids to teach them *tätä samaa* (this same). Here Nina is activating a discourse of *jatkuvuus* that bring notions of tradition, education and upbringing to the fore.

A similar discourse is present in the speech of other interviewees. In the excerpt below Pia illustrates parental influence in the education about nature.

Excerpt 14

Miten sinun kasvatuksesi vaikutti siihen että arvostat luontoa? [Jos vaikutti...] Toki se vaikuttaa ja just se että, siis lähtien omista vanhemmista ja isovanhemmista...ja se on niin ku, kesät on vietetty mökillä ja... se on niin ku ollut osa siitä. Ehkä joskus jossain tietysti kaikki tommoinen niin ku ulkovessa ja ei juokseva vettä niin joskus teini-iässä tuntu että tää on super tylsä mennä sinne, että on semmoinen kahden vuoden vaihe kun ei halua lähde mökille ja vain...sitten rupee taas arvostaa ja vie omat lapset sinne...(PIA)

[How did your upbringing influenced the way you value nature? If it influenced?] Of course it influences, especially that, coming from own parents and grandparents...it is like, summers have been spent at the cottage and...it has been like part of that. Maybe sometimes somewhere of course all this like the outside toilet and that there is no running water, sometimes as a teenager you start feeling very stupid to go there...so there is that couple of years phase when you don't want to go to the cottage...but then you start to appreciate again and come back and take your own kids there...(PIA)

Although education about nature is included in the curricula of formal education in Finland, it is also part of the kids upbringing and it seems to be heavily implicit and transmitted by social relations, in this case *vanhemmista ja isovanhemmista* (parents and grandparents). But upbringing and education are not the only cultural aspects related to *jatkuvuus*. In the excerpt below Pia introduces the concept of caring for the forest *kestävästi* (in a sustainable way, sustainably).

Excerpt 15

[Mitä ajattelet Suomen metsistä?]

Joo, mun mielestä Suomessa...se on, niin kun teollinenkin metsäkäyttö on jo niin pitkäaikaista että,...no tietysti on ollut jotain virheliikkeitä niin ku varmaan kaikessa, kaikki historiassa on niin ku liikaa hakattu ja käynyt niin kun tämmöistä, mutta tota...se ymmärretään että sitä pitää hoitaa kestävästi jotta siitä saa sen taloudellisenkin hyödyn koska se on Suomen...kyllä mun mielestä Suomen metsänhoito on hyvällä tasolla...(PIA)

[What do you think of Finnish forests?]

Yes, I think that in Finland...it is, like this use of industrial forest has existed for such a long time that, ...well of course there have been mistakes like probably in everything, in all history the trees have been cut excessively and happened like this...but it is understood that it needs to be taken care of sustainably in order to get also the economic benefit because it is Finland's...yes, in my opinion the Finnish forestry is on a good level...(PIA)

So far it might seem that the discourse of *jatkuvuus* refers mostly to the sustainability of the forest and to teaching the future generations *tätä samaa*. Although it is defined as the unbroken, consistent existence or operation of something, continuity is usually understood as a progression to the next point, or to the future. Nevertheless, in the extract below, when concluding her response to the question “*What is nature?*” Arja introduces a different conception of *jatkuvuus*, one that refers to the past.

Excerpt 16

Ja mun mielestä kyllä sitten myöskin luonto mulle elämyksenä ei se...ei tarte olla koskematon vaan että, koska Suomessa on kans luonto on on oikeastaan täällä historiasta kyllä koko maa on niin kun jollain tavalla ollut käytössä jossain vaiheessa, että semmoista aivan koskematonta jossa ihminen ei olisi koskaan tehnyt mitään niin, meillä ei semmosta kovin paljo oo... (ARJA)

And then in my opinion nature as an experience for me does not...doesn't need to be untouched because in Finland nature has actually, in history, the whole

country has been used in one way or the other at some point. That kind of untouched, that no human has done anything with it, we don't have a lot of that... (ARJA)

By introducing the history of Finnish forests, Arja explicitly brings forward the explicit discursive hub of *jatkuvuus*. She states that since Finland became a place for dwelling, people have existed in a close relationship with nature. When the interviewee refers to the fact that Finnish forest have always been used, she appeals to tradition when she mentions that forests where “no human has done anything with it, we don't have a lot of that.” This claim could also justify doing something with the forest of concern. In addition, by mentioning that there is not much *koskematon* (untouched) nature in Finland, she seemingly discards a possible cultural discourse of Finnish nature's purity. The historic narration of Finnish forest continues later in the interview when Arja shares her opinions about *Suomen metsät* (the Finnish forests).

Excerpt 17

Olen siitä mieltä että Suomen metsillä on niin ku erinomainen tulevaisuus edessä...siis Suomen metsät olivat joskus 1800-luvulla todella huonossa kunnossa, karsinta hakattu...niin siihen nähden niin kuuluneet niin kun kahden sadan vuoden aikana on saatu paljon aikaan...(ARJA)

I think that the Finnish forests have an excellent future ahead...so at some point in the 1800s they were in really bad shape, so considering that I think that a lot has been achieved in the two centuries that have gone by...(ARJA)

The cultural foci identified in the excerpts above include notions related to tradition, future generations, development, utility and good expectations. They also seem to conduct to *jatkuvuus*, and like Arja mentions in the excerpt above, an excellent future. The achievement of two centuries means a development in the management of Finnish forests, and also a relevant element for *jatkuvuus* and its meaning of sustainability.

Nevertheless, the following two excerpts provide a different understanding about nature's continuity. The first excerpt is part of the response to the question “*What is nature?*” This excerpt is rich with descriptions anchored in a *paikka*. In a novel way, it offers a different view of the role of humans in this *jatkuvuus*.

Excerpt 18

Luonto on läsnä. Ja se mitä me rakennamme tässä (viittaa ikkunasta Suomenlahden rantaa) niin on häilyvän pieni hetki niin ku pitkässä aikajänteessä. Jos se ihmiskunta täällä tuhoutuu niin luonto ottaa tämän hyvin nopeasti...kaikki. Ja mennään 100 tai 150 vuotta eteenpäin, rakennukset on romahtanut ja rupee olemaan maan peitossa ja pikku hiljaa alkaa hahmottaa. Eli.. Luonto on meitä voimakkaampi. Tule aina olemaan. (PAAVO)

Nature is present. And that what we build here (points outside the window to the shores of the Gulf of Finland) is a flickering short time on a long timeline. If mankind here is destroyed then the nature will take over fast...everything. And let's go 100 or 150 years forward, the buildings have collapsed and start to be covered in ground and little by little the picture comes together. I mean...Nature is stronger than us. It will always be. (PAAVO)

In the previous excerpt nature is understood as being *läsnä* (present) and larger than what *rakennamme tässä* (what we build here). Paavo's speech could raise ideas and concerns about mankind's existence, for example when he mentions the possibility of the human being vanished and nature taking over. The mention of *häilyvän pieni hetki* (a flickering short time) in a long timeline is an explicit reference to the discourse being approached. The timeline, a common graphical symbol representing continuity, is indeed a basic element for conceiving and measuring it. Our relationship with nature is too short and feeble. Regarding the relationship with nature, if *oma pienuutensa* and being a *pieni osaa tätä kaikkea* has been understood after having the opportunity to *rentoutua ja rauhoittua* and to *olla itsensä kanssa*, then it is not surprising to claim, like Paavo does, that nature is stronger than us and that it will always be. Nature will continue even if people and buildings do not.

Paavo's concern with mankind being created to be and live in nature surfaces throughout most of the interview. In one part of the interview he states: "we live all our lives completely under nature's mercy". The second excerpt is part of the response to the question "*How does it feel to be in nature?*" and it introduces an interesting notion related to *jatkuvuus*: evolution.

Excerpt 19

Me, kuitenkin pitkässä aikajänteessä evoluution historiassa niin olemme eläneet luonnossa, koko ajan. Tää tekno...teknokraattinen yhteiskunta, se ajanjakso niin toivottoman lyhyt evolutiivisessa aikaperspektiivissä, että me ollaan kuitenkin totuttu olemaan ja elämään luonnossa, siihen meitä on valmistettu...(PAAVO)

We, however for a long timeline in the history of evolution have lived in the nature, all the time. This techno... technocratic society's timespan is so short in the evolutionary timeframe, that we have anyhow gotten used to be and live in the nature, we have been created for that...(PAAVO)

Paavo states that *pitkässä aikajänteessä* (on a long timeline) mankind has lived in nature, all the time. In the excerpt above Paavo utilizes more complex elements related to *jatkuvuus*, for instance, he mentions how the current technocratic society's *ajanjakso* (timespan) is a short one *evolutiivisessa aikaperspektiivissä* (in the evolutionary timeframe). Discursive devices like the two phrases mentioned above are related to evolution, and produce a contradictory understanding of the relationship between mankind and nature over time. In the first sentence, Paavo mentions that for a long time humans have *eläneet luonnossa* (lived in the nature). From this statement it can be assumed that the relationship between humans and nature is long, and it could be argued that also deep.

Nevertheless, in the second sentence Paavo describes the specific era that we live now as a relatively short one, and dominated by technology. It is inevitable that the technological society will have an influence on human relationship with nature. One conflicting understandings arising from this is the character of this relationship. Previously it was stated that nature is stronger than humans. However, if mankind finally found a way, through technology, to be above nature then the power balance of the relationship changes and a negative tension in this relationship proves inevitable. Paavo confines the current era to an insignificant *ajanjakso* in evolution; an irruption of mankind into the purpose we have been created for, *olemaan ja elämään luonnossa* (to be and live in nature).

For Paavo, *jatkuvuus* is related to evolution, the human relationship with nature, and balance of power between both. Throughout his speech, one can notice that Paavo considers the relationship between nature and humans as a very strong one, for good or bad. This relation with nature can be deep, solid, and old. It can also be qualitatively affected by temporary factors like the era that is lived in evolution.

In the excerpt below Anu comments how the age of a person could have an effect in the quality of the relationship with nature.

Excerpt 20

[...] *Sen kyllä voi sanoa, että huomaa että koko ajan mitä vanhemmaksi tulee niin sitä enemmän niin kun arvostaa ja sitä niin kun jotenkin tärkeämmäksi se tulee ne kaikki luonnon elementit ja just ehkä se liittyy se, tavallaan, se rauha ja rentoutuminen ja mitä siellä luonnossa saa. Sen selvästi huomaa että koko ajan se on tavallaan niin kun tärkeämpää ja tärkeämpää, että ikä kyllä vaikuttaa...(ANU)*

[...] Indeed one could say that it seems that the older you get then the more you value it, and in a way it like becomes more like important, all the elements of nature, and maybe this way it is linked, in a way, to the peace and relaxation and what you get in the nature. It is clearly noticeable that all the time it is like more important and more important, that age does indeed affects...(ANU)

For Anu the age of a human influences how nature is valued. In Excerpt 14, Pia commented that there is a point in one's life when the cottage seems unattractive as a holiday destination, but then after some time it is valued again. According to Pia, this appreciation is even transmitted further by taking the kids there. Thus, *jatkuvuus* is not only related to mankind's evolution, but also to the individual's specific development. At this point several cultural propositions related to *jatkuvuus* can be introduced.

- Nature does not need to be *koskematon* (untouched)
- The relationship of Finns and Finnish nature is long and deep.
- Mankind has been created to *olemaan ja elämään luonnossa* (be and live in nature) at all times.
- Previous generations strongly influence how nature is valued.
- To ensure *jatkuvuus*, it is important to go to nature *lasten kanssa* (with the kids) and teach them *tätä samaa* (the same).
- *Jatkuvuus* is about both continuity and sustainability.
- Nature is *läsnä* (present) and its superiority over mankind is clear: this presupposes *jatkuvuus*.

The cultural propositions about *jatkuvuus* are concerned with several topics like evolution, sustainability, or the relationship between nature and humans. *Jatkuvuus* is a way of recognizing something precious and wanting it to be preserved. What can be preserved is the nature, the way in which nature is conceived and treated, the identity of a person or a nation, and even nature as a way of subsistence. To preserve nature, the human does not need to retreat from the relationship with it,

but needs to find ways to make this relationship work. Like Arja stated in Excerpt 16, not much of the *koskematon* (untouched) nature in Finland exists now. The nature that exists in Finland is the one with a long and deep relationship with its dwellers. Regarding sustainability, interesting notions come to the fore, for instance, that the focus of sustainability could be on finding the right way of relating with nature, and not neglect it by pretending to be superior to it.

The three themes analysed above, *rentoutua ja rauhoittua, olla itsensä kanssa*, and *jatkuvuus* are related in interesting ways. They all form part of the cultural landscape of the participants, and to their identities. From the cultural propositions outlined after each subsection above, several cultural premises can be drawn. These premises are statements that synthesize certain elements such as terms and ways of speaking that make up the cultural discourses of the participants. The main premises that I identified throughout the data are listed below.

- Nature is a *paikka* in the abstract and concrete way. It helps to endure, reflect, build and assert identity.
- In the nature it is easier to *rentoutua ja rauhoittua* in order to *olla itsensä kanssa*.
- *Olla itsensä kanssa* helps to think deep and to construct identity.
- In nature, the relationship with oneself takes precedence.
- Nature is an ideal context for the expression of one's individuality.
- Identity can be personal, but also conceived as group or national identity.
- Identity can be understood also from the spiritual point of view.
- A strong group identity can materialize in traditions related to nature that provide a sense of *jatkuvuus*.
- Identity must be transmitted to new generations in order to ensure *jatkuvuus*.
- *Jatkuvuus* is a feature of nature, for instance, when thinking about evolution.
- *Jatkuvuus* is also grounded on nature's superior strength.
- *Jatkuvuus* is sustainability.

The aim of the chapter was to describe and interpret the speech of the research participants. The study of the values and beliefs of the professionals interviewed illustrates the linguistic and cultural elements drawn upon to create and shape frameworks when communicating about nature and the environment. In the next chapter I will proceed to the comparative and critical stage of the research.

6. Discussion

This chapter is divided in two sections. The first one will include a comparative analysis of the relationship with nature and place among three different groups. The groups to be compared are the Hispanics in New Mexico and their sense of relations in place as studied by Milstein et al. (2011), the Adult-onset Hunters in New England and their discourses of dwelling as investigated by Carbaugh & Cerulli (2012), and the Finnish group of environmental professionals interviewed for this thesis. Common and different discourses about nature and the relationship of humans with nature will be exemplified. The second section will then progress to the critical phase of the cultural discourse analysis. In addition, the cultural premises identified in the results section will be scrutinized and assessed in light of theory.

6.1 Finnish discourses about nature: serenity, reflection, and sustainability

In the six excerpts analysed in the first section of Chapter 5 almost all the interviewees refer to nature as a *paikka* (place) where one can do, reflect, feel, organize, purge, and recharge. The importance of nature is so explicitly highlighted and constantly reaffirmed that nature's primordial character is soon established. Furthermore, some aspects of nature even acquire spiritual connotations. Nevertheless, the way participants express about nature has a dual undertone.

Sometimes the participants refer to nature as a source or provider, and sometimes as a separate entity of which man is a part. On one side humans are conceived separately from nature, but able to access it and benefit from it. On the other side people are understood as a small part of a larger entity. This duality in the expressions about nature either inevitably leads to contradiction or requires further and careful elaboration. On the one side the human is separate but able to access the bigger entity that is nature, but on the other the human is a small part thus inserted in nature. In addition, the importance of nature is highlighted because it provides something that the latter does not.

In the previous chapter the discourse of *olla itsensä kanssa* was analysed

and nature found to be linked to notions of identity (personal, social or national). Nature is related to personhood and it is important for being an individual because it provides a space to construct identity. In the speech of most of the participants, a tendency to *olla itsensä kanssa* is noticeable either explicitly or implicitly. This trait has been linked to the character of Finns in previous research (see Carbaugh, 2006.) According to Carbaugh, “this ‘natural’ (‘luonteva, luonnollinen’) way of being is linked, through uses of Finnish investigated below, with a range of related terms, including prominently “*olla omissa oloissaan*” (being undisturbed in one’s thoughts) and “*mietiskellä*” (being contemplative and thoughtful)” (2006, p. 203). In the context of nature, this trait does not only serve the purpose of respecting someone’s privacy. Immersed in own thoughts while in the nature, one can construct, recognize or assert one’s own identity. Nature aids in the construction of this identity, for instance, by providing elements on which to construct a solid identity. By understanding *oma pienuteensa* one is better able to build-up an identity where personal traits like unpretentiousness and modesty have an origin. In addition, the spiritual dimension is also strongly linked to *olla itsensä kanssa*. Like Carbaugh et al. (2006) proposed “being alone in one’s thoughts, quiet and silent (‘*hiljaa*’), makes it possible to ‘*mietiskellä*’ (contemplation, meditation, reflection)” (p. 213).

It has been established that communication and culture construct each other. Regarding speech about nature and the environment this link can be further discovered by analysing speech from different cultures. In their research about sense of relations in place, Milstein et al. (2011) studied the discourses of US Southwest Hispanics about their relation to the land and those that have inhabited it. Before comparing the relation to nature of the Hispanics and the Finnish, some common ground or basic similarities between both groups need to be provided. There are indeed some minor similarities between both groups. One could be the level of importance of natural resources and conditions for subsistence. Both the Hispanic participants studied by Milstein et al. (2011) and the Finnish in this thesis are located in a *paikka* that is not characterized by mild geographic or weather conditions. Another similarity between the Finnish and Hispanic is related to

dwelling and time. According to Paavo in Excerpt 19, time does matter in the relationship with nature. In addition, in Excerpt 20 Anu commented that indeed age is a relevant element in the appreciation of nature. Milstein et al. (2011) mention how a number of Hispanics have populated the US Southwest either for a longer period of time (if Native American-mestizo) or otherwise for a few centuries (if Spanish-mestizo) and agree that indeed there is “one essential difference: time in place, a very long time” (Knuffle, 2007, p. 55).

Nature is a *paikka* to construct identity, but for the Hispanics, in addition to it, social relations are important in the construction of identity. This broader or general conception of nature as a *paikka* is similar to the one used by the Finnish participants when they refer to nature a *paikka* in the abstract sense and not a specific one. For the Finnish group, individual identity is constructed privately although the process later contemplates common traditions. For the Finnish participants the social was not the primary function of nature: for them, nature is a *paikka* to relax and calm down and where identity is constructed and reaffirmed.

Between the Finnish and Hispanic, the priorities regarding the relationship with nature are different. For instance, for the Finnish the functions of nature are very specific (material, mental, physical and spiritual), consequential and then shared. For Hispanics it seems that both social relations and identity are intertwined. Nevertheless, there is one strong similarity between the groups’ notion of identity: the relevance of the *paikka*. As established in the previous chapter, for the Finnish participants nature is a *paikka* with strong consequences for identity. According to Neri Holguin, the US Southwest director of The Wilderness Society the same is for Hispanics, for whom a “sense of place nurtures a sense of self and is closely tied to it” (Knuffle, 2007, p. 55 in Milstein et al., 2011, p. 487). This perspective links the cultural and the environmental communication point of view and further supports the claims that culture and communication construct each other.

Another interesting similarity of Finnish and Hispanic relation to nature is the approach they take towards nature. The position of different cultures towards nature has already been researched. Hispanics from New Mexico were found to

reflect the submissive position and to display high levels of intracultural congruence or “uniqueness” in their position towards nature (Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck, 1961, p. 353) The similarity of this group of Hispanics with the Finnish group studied in this thesis is, again, partial. The Finnish participants display traits of both the submissive and dominant positions. The latter position is shown, for instance, when Paavo mentions the technocratic society in Excerpt 19, and to a lesser extent when other participants talk about obtaining something from nature. For instance, in Excerpt 14 Pia mentions that in Finland it is understood that the forest needs to be taken care of sustainably in order to obtain, also, the economic benefit. Although the dominant position is identifiable in the Finnish discourse, in some cases they approach nature from a submissive position. For instance, in Excerpt 18 Paavo contends that nature is stronger than us and that it will always be. The same position is also found when Paavo mentions understanding his *oma pienuutensa* (own insignificance) after contemplating the magnificent Annapurna.

Nevertheless, the dominant and submissive are not the only approaches taken by the Finnish environmental professionals. Paavo displays an approach that can be described as one that is in harmony with nature. In Excerpt 19 he mentions that throughout evolution we have lived in nature and that we have gotten used to it. Although the statement does not imply a strong degree of harmonious relationship, it does not close the possibility of harmony. The Finnish approach to nature seems to be a middle way, i.e. Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck’s (1961) position of harmony: if the three orientations are seen as a continuum, the Finnish participants stand closer to the centre. They do not have a fixed or very strong stand towards nature, but a more neutral approach: one of harmony with nature. Pia describes the Finnish position towards nature in Excerpt 8 as “a very pragmatic approach...”

One value that is very strong among the Finnish participants, but not so much on the Hispanics studied by Milstein et al. (2011) is that of *rentoutua ja rauhoittua*. The thematic code of *rentoutua ja rauhoittua* is one that includes spiritual notions. Hispanics’ speech included terms related to religion, for instance, “sign of the times” (Milstein et al., 2011, p. 498-499), and personal names like Petra and Otero that mean Peter and altar, respectively. Nevertheless, there are few

references to what was described by Oravec (1981) as a “sublime response,” a spiritual state in which the person could feel apprehension, personal insignificance akin to awe, and spiritual exhalation while being in a vast natural place (1981 in Milstein et al., 2011). Unlike the Hispanics, the terms used by the Finnish participants do not refer to religion but to spirituality. Most of the participants showed a high degree of sublime response while in nature. The best example of sublime response is when Paavo had trouble to explain the feeling that Annapurna arouse in him and finally commented that he experienced awe.

There are other instances where Finnish participants communicate a sublime response experience while in a vast natural area. For instance, in Excerpt 5 Arja mentions about her trip to Saariselka and how at the top of the hill she could describe the scenery as *vapaata tuttuutta* (free familiarity). In Excerpt 6 Elina also shows a degree of sublime response after watching the river scenery from her office window. Nevertheless, not only the thematic code of *rentoutua ja rauhoittua* includes notions of sublime response. Other thematic codes like *olla itsensä kanssa* include similar feelings. For instance, in Excerpt 7 Nina talks about feeling a small part of *tätä kaikkea* sometimes while in nature. One excerpt belonging to the thematic code of *jatkuvuus* also includes what could be considered a sublime response. In Excerpt 18 Paavo seems to experience a feeling that is also considered a sublime response: apprehension. He commented that the nature is *läsnä* (present), then he questioned what would happen if humankind ends and nature prevails. He then commented that nature is and will always be stronger than humankind. The levels of sublime responses showed by Finnish participants highlight the importance of nature as a *paikka* to reflect and build identity. It also signifies hope for sustainability since these kinds of responses activate people to support of environmental causes (Oravec, 1996).

Although both groups experience it, sublime response is experienced differently by those belonging to the Hispanic and Finnish groups. For the Hispanic, the sublime responses happen while accompanied but also by oneself. Nevertheless, when by oneself, those that lived before on the same land are remembered, therefore, the sublime is tied to relations to both the *paikka* and to

those that lived in that *paikka* (Milstein et al. 2011, p. 499). The Finnish participants describe social relations in nature as those close to them and relevant for *jatkuvuus*, for instance, immediate family and in some cases friends. The Finnish participants experience sublime response mostly while alone in nature. This group does not mention relations to ancestors explicitly, but do make references to this by pointing out, for instance, about Finnish nature being inhabited for a long time and about how their families influenced the way they see nature. Although both groups experience sublime response differently, the relation to *paikka* and those that lived in the *paikka* seems to be important. In the Finnish texts the radiant of relation is very strong in the three thematic hubs of concern. The relations can be either to nature, self, partner, family, acquaintances, pets, work superiors, foreigners. It could be claimed that the relationship to the *paikka* and to those that have lived there is a common characteristic of the Finnish and Hispanic approach to nature.

Another value present in both groups is that of *jatkuvuus*. This value is usually related to tradition, evolution, attachment, and relations in place. Although strongly active in both groups, *jatkuvuus* is expressed differently between Hispanics and the Finnish participants. It also carries different ideas about sustainability and the future of the environment and culture. Even post-colonial nuances are a clear difference in the conception of the environment, for instance, the position of Hispanics as both conquerors and conquered. The Finnish participants do not have this kind of background and link *jatkuvuus* to tradition, teaching new generations, and caring for nature. Regarding *jatkuvuus*, for the Finnish participants profiting from nature is not opposed to sustainability; on the contrary, it is one of the reasons for it. For the Hispanics, the emphasis is put first on family, relations and then tradition, and profit is seen as a secondary objective. One similarity related to *jatkuvuus* is the transmission of *tätä samaa* to their descendants. In the study about the Hispanics one of the community member commented: “I have opened their eyes to this beautiful place we live in” when talking about going to “walk the land” with the kids (Milstein et al., 2011 p. 499).

Carbaugh and Cerulli’s (2012) study about the cultural discourses of

dwelling of adult-onset hunters in New England also highlight the importance of place and relations in environmental communication. Similarly to the Finnish and the Hispanic, the participants of Carbaugh and Cerulli's (2012) study also link identity and relations to their places. However, one difference in how the New England residents view nature compared to the other two groups is related to the activities carried out in nature. For instance, one of the study's participants mentions the "proper activities for those who dwell there," and stress "The goals of "rural integrity" and proper "self-sufficiency"" (Carbaugh and Cerulli, 2012, p. 16). Therefore, dwelling in a place and knowing it provides some degree of moral authority to define the acceptable activities to carry on in that specific place. Carbaugh and Cerulli (2012) highlight the idea of "propriety" (p. 17) and support Berry's (2000 in Carbaugh & Cerulli, 2012, p. 17) idea of nature as a living landscape that allows dwellers to do something, but also limits some actions in a place. The authors claim that communication about the environment is, for many cultures, "to some important degree, always morally infused and localized" (Carbaugh & Cerulli, 2012, p. 7). Nevertheless, ideas directly related to integrity, propriety, permission, and other references to moral notions in nature were not mentioned by the Finnish participants in this study or by the Hispanic participants in Milstein et al. (2011). For instance, according to Milstein et al. (2011), for Hispanics the core themes are family, stories and identity. For Finnish participants in this study the main topics are related to relaxation, being oneself and continuity or sustainability.

The cultural discourses of dwelling of the three cultures discussed above were identified by utilizing CuDA (see Carbaugh, 2007a). Therefore, the key and secondary discourse themes can be compared. In *Table 2* I list ten 'Key' and 'Secondary' discourse themes that are present in the speech of the participants across the three research projects. The first five key themes refer to those that concern with the individuals and the other five with those that concern the larger context, i.e. the community or culture. In the table, the key discourse themes are marked, for each group, with a 1 and the secondary with a 2. The former refer to the main discourses, i.e. the topics that are salient and explicit in the participants'

speech. The secondary discourse themes refer to those that are implicit in the speech whether strongly or not as well as to those themes that are explicit but weak. Some fields are marked with a hyphen: that means that the theme was not identified in the cultures' speech.

Discourse themes	New Mexico's Hispanics	Finnish environmental professionals	Adult-onset hunters in New England
Identity / Personhood	2	1	1
Relaxation / Calming down	-	1	-
Spirituality / Religion	1	2	-
Relation with place	1	1	1
Recreation	2	2	1
Resources (e.g. food, revenue) from nature	2	1	1
Propriety / Integrity	2	2	1
Social relations	1	2	2
Stewardship / Administration	2	2	1
Continuity / Sustainability	1	1	1

Table 2. List of 10 key (1) and secondary (2) discourse themes identified in the environmental communication of different cultures.

Common key discourse themes across the three cultures are: 1) Relation with place; 2) Resources (e.g. food, revenue, sport); and 3) Continuity or sustainability. The discourse that shows the most variation is that of Spirituality/Religion: this is a key topic for Hispanics, secondary for Finnish and not evident in the speech of New England's hunters. The most unique discourse is that of Relaxation/Calming down which is a key discourse for the Finnish but is not evident in the Hispanic or New English speech. Since the similarities are not very strong, the three cultures seem to be very different from each other. However, there are five similarities between the Finnish and Hispanic, five similarities in discourse themes between the Finnish and New England's community, and only three similarities between the New English and Hispanic. This last finding might represent an updated confirmation of what Kluckhohn & Strodtbeck established in 1961: that the Hispanics from the US Southwest show a strong difference in approach towards nature than that expressed by "most Americans" (p. 13).

Comparing discourses about nature supports cross-cultural understanding of environmental topics. And it is also an attempt to understand better our own places (see Carbaugh & Cerulli, 2012) and relationship towards nature. The comparisons

above further demonstrate Carbaugh and Cerulli's statement that through the discursive devices we use when talking about our places, "we communicate our nature and our environments in linguistically and culturally particular ways." (2012, p. 18). Opening up to different views of the environment could enrich the way we speak about nature. Allowing different concepts to coexist could be a challenge, but it could also make the conversations about nature more complete and enriching.

6.2 Critical Evaluation of the thesis

The most salient discursive hubs identified throughout the data were that of *rentoutua ja rauhoittua* (to relax and to calm down), *olla itsensä kanssa* (being with oneself) and *jatkuvuus* (continuity). These results were obtained by applying Carbaugh's (2007a) CuDA, particularly the analytical tools of dwelling, identity and relation. At the end of the results section, several cultural premises were outlined. Some of them relate to the individual, some concern larger groups of people like family and others involve a whole national group.

One communication practice that can be assessed critically is that of conveying cultural characteristics that can be described as stereotyping, both of own and other's culture. Few examples like this can be found throughout the data and they provide insights into this practice. Some of these examples is the comment expressed by Pia in the interview that Finnish people are "docile" as well as the comment made by Elina in Excerpt 10 in which she describes Finnish culture as very "modest" and not boastful of legitimate achievements. Another example of stereotyping is mentioning other cultures as having definite and strong characteristics, and the people of those cultures to have traits that Finnish people do not or could hardly enact. For instance in Excerpt 9 Nina illustrates how she perceives the French speech culture to be very strong and aggressive compared to how the Finnish speech culture is "in Finland it would have been different situation when we are like..." (Nina, Excerpt 9). The participants that engage in stereotyping do it voluntarily, however, in some cases they are clearly hesitant to express exactly what stereotype they claim for their own culture. It seems that they prefer to be assessed by someone outside their own speech culture, and/or that they

are eager to build their own speech culture and identity through intercultural encounters.

Certainly, as mentioned before, the *paikka* does have a strong influence on people's identity. Nevertheless, by *olla itsensä kanssa* the individual is able to draw from a larger set of elements from which to build its identity. Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961) contended that "cultures do change in direction - that is, change in their basic values" (p. 9). Although the traditions have influenced the way nature is approached and also the identity of a person, ultimately the person is able to reassess its identity continuously. Certainly, as humans we are concerned about *jatkuvuus* and so is nature, but nature is also in constant movement and so are identities. By including stereotypes about a cultural group in our speech we are not only enacting those stereotypes, but also probably finding evidence to support them and a framework to apply them.

Another cultural premise that could be assessed critically is that of reflecting and thinking about broader things and own identity when one is able to *olla itsensä kanssa*. If *olla itsensä kanssa* allows one to draw insights about broader things while being in a relaxed, familiar and cooperative *paikka* then when one is not able to *olla itsensä kanssa* the capacity to think about broader things might be diminished. In this case, in addition to creative thinking, other superior mental abilities could also be slightly compromised. One solution might be to learn to find those characteristics that are common to the familiar and the unfamiliar *paikka*.

One cultural premise that could be evaluated is that of requiring a high level of seclusion to be able to *rentoutua ja rauhoittua* in nature. Like Paavo commented, recent research shows that even a short stroll in nature suffices to diminish stress level (see Barton et al., 2009; Hansmann et al., 2007; Morita et al., 2007). Nevertheless, social relationships have also been linked to mood improvement and stress reduction (see Heinrichs et al., 2003). Perhaps the beneficial effects of nature are not conditioned to the privacy of a place, but can be also achieved in public urban locations (see Sugiyama et al., 2008). Certainly, this would require certain urban settings to be ecoplanned: designed in a way that

contemplates the human as a part of his *paikka* without separating it from its source of identity, endurance and spiritual insights.

Limitations of the thesis

The goal of this thesis is to contribute to the advancement of knowledge of environmental communication in the field of speech communication. Cox (2013) affirms that on a conceptual level, environmental communication contributes to the theory of human communication. The reason why we need to study environmental communications from the perspective of intercultural encounters is because “one cannot deal with nature without dealing with culture” (Flor, 2004, p. 17).

The aim of the thesis was to facilitate understanding of environmental matters across different cultures and to promote an openness that could enrich discussions. I believe that dialogue, agreement and negotiation about environmental matters would be more clear and productive if stakeholders would understand what is being discussed and from what cultural or national perspective. Certainly, like Carbaugh & Cerulli (2012) argued, a “lack of shared experience in place can prohibit certain ways of speaking” (p. 15). Different understanding of environmental communication in different geographic and cultural regions is already evident while this thesis is being written. For instance, Cox is a scholar from a North-American university (North Carolina at Chapel Hill) therefore it is possible that his understanding and way of talking about the concept of corporate environmental communication might be to some extent different from the approach taken by a scholar from Europe. Carbaugh is also located in the United States, but understands the Finnish context to a certain extent after having conducted research in Finland and about Finland. I am also doing this thesis while slowly getting to know one of its key subjects, which is nature. In addition, my knowledge of Finnish language and culture is still being developed. All this reflects the main subject and problematic of the thesis: that environmental communication is deeply cultural.

One limitation of this thesis is that utilizing certain terminology about nature and the environment could further reinforce ideas that separate humans from

nature (see Milstein et al., 2011). Although the ethnographic approach I chose allowed me the freedom to explore different terminology (like for instance Milstein et al. did in their research). The terms I utilized throughout the thesis are similar to those that constitute a common code with the interviewees because novel terminology would have confused them before, during and after the interview.

After conducting the literary review for this thesis, I identified a few areas in which environmental communication research could be enriched. For instance, although there is a vast amount of research about the topic of environmental communication, some research is conducted in academic fields outside that of communication. It would be beneficial to know and assess the research done in the ethnography of communication tradition, even if arising from other academic fields. One research gap in environmental communication is related to cross-cultural understanding of the subject and the values and beliefs that different groups hold about topics related to it (for instance, nature, places, identity). New knowledge could be produced regarding the ideal methods to gather and compare data about beliefs and values about nature. Another limitation is that the concept environmental communication is very ambiguous and research about it conducted within the field of speech communication needs to be focused on more specific areas.

Language and translations

Several language considerations were outlined in the data and methodology chapter. Most language matters were related to the reliability of the translations and transcriptions. The challenges originated or are directly related to my level of proficiency in Finnish language, particularly in understanding spoken Finnish and being able to transcribe it. More than one review of the transcriptions and translations was needed to ensure the meanings were correct. Translation and transcription reviews conducted by natives were very useful to understand the meaning of certain terms and also the way in which they are transcribed in spoken or vernacular Finnish. In addition, the interviewees were also involved in the process of reviewing and approving the Finnish transcription as well as the translation to English.

Some terms are not easy to translate from Finnish to English. I was careful not to change the meaning of the original statements. In order to conduct high quality communication data analysis the tacit knowledge of culture and language needs to be very high. I consider myself to have a considerable knowledge of Finnish language and culture; however, ethnography of communication research requires a very specialized and precise understanding of some terms. In some cases the task of translating and interpreting some terms proved to be challenging and time consuming due to the difficulty to find the equivalent of Finnish terms in English language. Nevertheless, repeated proofreading, careful contextual interpretation and revision by natives were useful and effective ways of ensuring reliability.

7. Conclusion

One of the goals of this thesis was to find meaning in the communication of environmental professionals about topics related to nature. The research question asked what kinds of values and beliefs can be identified in the speech of Finnish environmental professionals. The purpose was to find out the cultural premises embedded in the communication about nature enacted by Finnish environmental professionals. Analysing the participants' speech through CuDA's analytic tools of dwelling, identity and relation allowed me to identify deep notions about nature and the environment.

Throughout this thesis I have illustrated how environmental communication is deeply cultural. For this reason it seems to be in need of an anchor or a place where the communicant can go back to find a reference. For the Finnish participants that place could be the *kotipesä* (homebase in sports, nest when referring to birds), but in its purest form: nature. I explored the relatively new concept of environmental communication and how *place* is relevant in shaping what people think about subjects related to nature. I have analysed how *place* and *culture* can affect the way we communicate about nature or the environment. Carbaugh (1996) has already stated that communication is doubly placed: it is both located in place, and it also shapes our senses of our places (p. 38). Morgan (2002) further confirmed that one must understand the local systems of communication in order to understand places and their meanings. The results section of this thesis shows and confirms that indeed *place* affects how we understand and communicate nature. Furthermore, the three concepts influence each other in a cyclical fashion (see Figure 2).

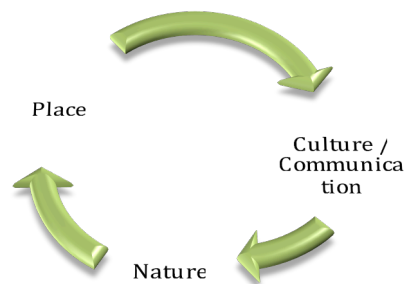


Figure 2. *Place* affects the ways we speak about nature, i.e. how we understand, construct, and communicate it.

After analysing the data theoretically and descriptively I also proposed an interpretation of it in the form of cultural propositions and cultural premises. The key terms that I consider to make up some of the Finnish discourses about nature were also carefully examined in this part of the analysis. Afterwards, I compared some of the discourses identified to those of another context. In this comparative stage of the analysis, I compared the Finnish discourses about nature to other existent discourses utilizing as a reference the research of Hispanic's environmental communication conducted by Milstein et al. (2011) and that about hunters in New England conducted by Carbaugh and Cerulli (2012).

Some results found in the interpretive analysis draw attention to deep cultural beliefs about "Finnishness". The identity factor was especially important: the participants need nature not only as a way to relax and calm down and reflect, but also as a way to be with themselves. Since both reflecting and being with itself are highly intellectual and spiritual activities, the core discourse found is that of calmness as a condition to be. This particular discourse was not found in the other two cultures of reference, therefore, it could be claimed that it is a distinctive cultural characteristic of the Finnish participants.

Discourses about nature from the point of view of different cultures produces either confirmation of existent theories or their enrichment. The results showed that indeed cultures considered culturally and geographically remote can show similar discourses about nature. In the case of the Finnish and Hispanic, both cultures show a deep appreciation of nature for itself and identity is strongly tied to nature and the place that is dwelled. In the case of the Finnish and New England's communities, similarities also exist but in different discourse themes for instance in discourses about identity or personhood, relation with place, resources, social relations and continuity. A confirmation of an existing theory is the comparison made between the Hispanic and New England's communities. Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961) had already argued that the view of nature from the Hispanic perspective was considerably different from that of other cultural traditions in the US.

Conducting ethnographic research required a high level of analytical methodology. Different levels of reflexivity are needed because the researcher is bound to examine the data from the theoretical point of view to the very concrete and interpretive, then proceeding with the comparative and critical analysis. In the last stage of the analysis I offered both a critical view of some elements of the discourses about nature and also a critical analysis in terms of how the discourses might affect the way that notions about nature are approached. I focused on those beliefs about nature that could be further reinforced and that could affect, for instance, the way in which discussions with international actors are conducted.

One topic that served as a background for this thesis was that of sustainability or sustainable development. The results show that Finnish cultural discourses about nature include notions of sustainability, and that *jatkuvuus* (continuity) is the main term that defines Finnish understanding of sustainability. The results also reaffirm that the term sustainability is not only very ambiguous, but also deeply cultural. For the Finnish participants, sustainability means respecting the history of a *paikka*: its traditions and the people that were before. Family is also strongly linked to sustainability since it is the family that transmits values about nature to future generations.

Jatkuvuus (continuity) is also present in Finnish discourses about sustainability in other fields of research. For instance, in her thesis about sustainable food and the use of “wild food” in Finnish restaurants, Shrestha (2013) concludes that Finnish culture is a motivation for chefs to use forest products since they “have been used for a very long period of time. So, using wild food makes the restaurant appear close to nature and culture of Finland.” (p. 37). One of the chefs interviewed for Shrestha’s project claimed: “Finnish culture in fishing, collecting berries and mushroom, and hunting game animals is still in practice.” (2013, p. 30). This shows that discursive devices linked to *jatkuvuus* like the word *still* are utilized in reference to *jatkuvuus* (continuation) and sustainability. Another chef from Shrestha’s research claimed: “I have been having such food from a very young age and I still like it, this may be in the culture” (Shrestha, 2013, p. 30). Nevertheless, another chef interviewed by Shrestha claimed that this phenomenon

responds to a “food habit and it does not hold an important role in culture.” (2013, p. 30). However, a habit is also a custom and practice that is built over time therefore it points to *jatkuvuus*.

Future research about Finnish discourses of sustainability could show how this topic is strongly intertwined with the Finnish notion of *jatkuvuus* (continuity). Like Arja commented in Excerpt 16, “in Finland nature has actually, in history, the whole country has been used in one way or the other at some point.” Regarding the forest industry, it has been in Finland for a very long time, nevertheless, recently the industry has gone through several transformations. One of these is the focus on research and commercialization of biomaterials and the use of renewable energy.

Understanding how Finnish environmental professionals and others engaged in sustainable business speak means that we understand only one part of the global sustainability discourse. The term *sustainability* is currently utilized mostly in business, whereas in UN discussions and other international forums the term utilized is *sustainable development*. A multiplicity of meanings around sustainability or/and sustainable development (see Borowy, 2013; Kates et al., 2005; Redclift, 2005) can difficult the understanding of the concept from the point of view of different cultures. For Finns, the term sustainable development might appear as a redundant or obvious term whereas in other cultural contexts the same term might have more significant or particular meanings. For the Finnish participants sustainability as understood from a business perspective includes deeply held values about nature. Nevertheless, if the global discussion and action regarding these topics is to be continued, a focus on *places* as a way to understand different points of views could aid in the solution of environmental challenges and facilitate cooperation and conflict resolution.

Some discourses that can influence environmental business operations are those related to sustainability like *jatkuvuus*. Some Finnish companies already have a high level in these areas, however, it is also clear that the international business context is changing rapidly as are Finnish business practices. An interesting question for future research would be to assess how external influences are able to modify deep notions related to *jatkuvuus*. In addition, it would be interesting to

conduct comparative research on the same subject in other contexts, for instance, in Asia and Africa.

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9. Appendixes

This section includes the interview guides in Finnish and English. The guide was first written in English and translated to Finnish language.

Appendix 1 – Interview guide in Finnish language

Luonnosta (ja metsistä)

1. Mitä on luonto?
2. Mitä luonto sinulle merkitsee?
3. Miltä tuntuu olla luonnossa?
4. Mitä teet luonnossa?
5. Minkälaiset erityiset kokemukset sinulla on luonnosta? (Kenen kanssa ne tapahtuivat?)
6. Kuinka vanha olit kun aloit arvostaa luontoa?
7. Miten kasvatuksesi vaikutti siihen että arvostat luontoa?
8. Kenen kansa liikut luonnossa? (yksin, perheen, ystävien kanssa?)
9. Mitä ajattelet Suomen metsistä?
 - a. Entä muiden maiden metsistä kuten sädemetsistä?
10. Oletko huolissasi metsien tulevaisuudesta?

Ammatin valinnasta

1. Mitä opiskelit ja miten se liittyy luontoon?
2. Kuvittelitko/ajattelitko jo opiskelija-aikana, että sinusta tulisi ”ympäristöammattilainen”?
3. Kun olet luonnossa, oletko yksilönä vai oletko ammattilaisena?
4. Miten ammattisi ja kokemuksesi vaikuttaa yhtiön ympäristöpolitiikkaan?
5. Mikä on sinusta isoin haaste yhtiöiden ympäristötoiminnassa?
6. Miten ihmiset tai kollegasi reagoi kun ne kuulee että olet töissä metsäyhtiössä? Miltä se tuntuu?

UPM:elta

1. Mitä ajatuksia sinulla on UPM:n ympäristöosastosta sekä kollegoistasi?
2. Keskusteletko muiden UPM:n ympäristöammattilaisten kanssa enemmän teknologiasta, Bioforesta, luonnosta vai ympäristöhaasteista? (Mistä puhutte/keskustelette eniten?)
3. Miten selität ympäristöaiheita niille, jotka eivät tiedä ympäristöstä? Mielestäsi kenen kanssa on vaikein puhua näistä asioista?
4. Mitä sinusta on isoin uhka ympäristölle UPM:n toiminnassa?
5. Mitä ajattellet Biofore:n ”strategiasta”?
6. Onko UPM erilainen muihin metsäyhtiöihin verrattuna? Miten se on erilainen?

Appendix 2 – Interview guide in English language

Nature (and forests)

1. What is nature?
2. What does nature means to you?
3. How does it feel to be in the nature?
4. What do you do in the nature?
5. What are the specific experiences you have from nature? (With whom they occurred?)
6. How old were you when you started to appreciate nature?
7. How did your upbringing affect that you appreciate nature?
8. With who do you spend time in nature? (Itself, with family, with friends?)
9. What do you think of Finland's forests?
10. What about the forest in other countries? (Such as the rainforests?)
11. Are you worried about the future of the forests?

Career choices

1. What did you study and how does it relate to nature?
2. Did you imagine/think as a student that you would be an “environment” professional?
3. When you are in the nature, are you as an individual or as a professional?
4. How does your profession and experiences affect the company's environmental policy?
5. What is your biggest challenge in the company's environmental activities?
6. How do people react when they hear that you work for a forest company?
How does it feel?

About UPM

1. What are your thoughts on UPM's environmental department, as well as co-workers?
2. When you talk to other UPM's environmental professionals, do you talk more about technology, Biofore, nature or environmental challenges? (What do you talk/chat about the most?)
3. How do you explain environmental issues for those who do not know about the environment? With whom do you think is the most difficult to talk about these things?
4. What do you think is the biggest threat to the environment in UPM operations?
5. What do you think of the Biofore “strategy”?
6. Is UPM different to other forest products companies in the world? How is it different?